

HELP YOURSELF!

Food Rights and Responsibilities: Year 2 findings
from *Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility*



Food for a traditional wedding, Kaya, Burkina Faso, 2013. Photo: Alassane Pafadnam

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The second year results of a four-year study on how food price volatility affects everyday life uncovers the grassroots realities of the right to food. Most societies have shared understandings of the rights and responsibilities around protection against hunger. Customary rights and responsibilities, patchy and uneven at the best of times, are affected by rapid changes in food prices and responses to them; becoming less effective buffers against the global drivers of food insecurity. People at risk of hunger are keenly receptive to state and civil society action that strengthens their sense of right to food, but formal responsibilities for action are often unclear and monitoring systems rarely capture local realities. Food security programmes are often demeaning, divisive, unreliable, discriminatory and discretionary. This weakness of public accountability for food security would matter less if people felt that markets were doing the job of guaranteeing access to good food. However, complaints about volatile and rising food prices continue to be a feature of everyday life, contrary to the overall impression of falling prices on world markets.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FOOD RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each year, the *Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility* research project tracks global, national and local food prices and their effects on everyday life, and selects a special topic for focused research. *Help Yourself! Food Rights and Responsibilities* is the second synthesis report, and this year it zooms in on accountability for local food security. Taking a ground-level perspective on food security policies and programmes, the research asked: do people feel they have a right to food? If so, what does that mean? Who is responsible for ensuring that right is made real? How are they held to account?

The research uncovered some important new insights into the grassroots realities of the right to food. A blend of common custom, local and domestic politics, and international law shapes accountability at the local level. Most societies have shared understandings of the rights and responsibilities around protection against hunger, particularly for the most vulnerable. These ideas often derive from natural rights, moral and religious principles, and membership of society. They imply responsibilities of parents, families, and communities.

Box 1: Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility

Changes in food prices are significant events in people's lives. With funding from UK Aid and Irish Aid, in 2012 a four-year project began to track the impacts of these changes on everyday life. The social costs of managing change when food prices rise or are volatile are often invisible to policy makers. Nutritional or poverty measures can suggest people have coped well and are 'resilient', but neglect the costs of coping and resilience – more time and effort to feed and look after people; non-monetary effects on family, social, or gender relations; mental health costs such as stress; lower quality of life; feeling forced to eat 'foreign' or 'bad' food. These are important issues to those affected.

Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility aims to study how price changes affect the everyday lives of people on low or precarious incomes over the period 2012–2015. It looks at paid work, unpaid care work or family responsibilities, how relationships are affected, and at the resources with which people cope.

The collective of researchers works in 10 urban/peri-urban and 13 rural locations across 10 low- to middle-income countries, revisiting, as far as possible, the same people – approximately 1500. The approach is sociological, aiming to capture the local experiences and effects of global processes, ultimately through a mix of longitudinal qualitative case studies and nationally representative data analysis. In 2013 the study also covered people's experiences of accountability for local food security, adapting established frameworks for the analysis of accountability in public services. Each year we will synthesize our learning and provide a more in-depth analysis of topical issues.

Visit www.oxfam.org.uk/foodprices for more information.

These customary rights and responsibilities, patchy and uneven at the best of times, are themselves affected by rapid changes in food prices and responses to them; becoming less effective buffers against the global drivers of food insecurity. And despite much capital city talk about the Human Right to Food, and the very real advances in securing such rights in a handful of places, they are not (yet) being replaced – or even reinforced – by formal legal rights with public policies to make them real. Moves towards a more formal, state-administered right to food are in process, and people at risk of hunger are keenly receptive to state and civil society action that strengthens their sense of that right. Yet even where formal rights had been

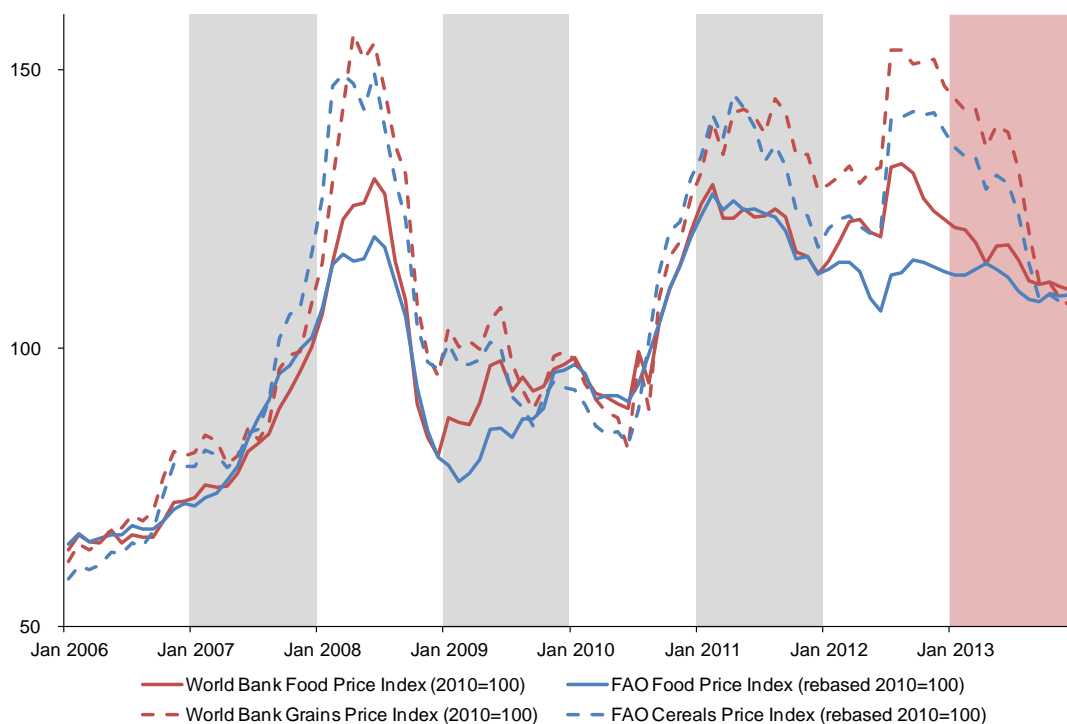
established in law and people knew of them, folk rights remained more accessible and more realizable. Few participants in this research felt able to realize those rights, or had the means by which to hold public authorities to account.

There are examples of accountable, responsive action against hunger, and these show what is possible. Once governments explicitly accepted responsibility for ensuring food security, they do more to realize the right to food, and citizens judge their performance against those promises. Much can be done to strengthen accountability. Rights and responsibilities can be clarified and claimed; people can participate in setting more realistic standards and monitoring systems for the policies and programmes they need; and food security failures can be made more visible and more costly for those responsible.

Global and national food prices

Help Yourself! builds on findings from last year in an increasingly vivid picture of how people live in a time of food price volatility, and the implications for human wellbeing and development. Last year's report, *Squeezed*, argued that while food price changes no longer came as a shock, their cumulative adverse effects meant relentless pressures on home life, work life, and social relationships. With the memory of global price spikes so fresh, even the prospect of rising wages (more in some countries and sectors than others) is not enough to ensure people feel properly food secure; gnawing food insecurity and the sense of never getting better off lingers.

Figure 1: Food price indices decline in 2013, but remain above pre-crisis levels



Source: FAO Food Price Index, <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>; and World Bank, <http://databank.worldbank.org/>

The weakness of public accountability for food security would matter less if people felt that markets were doing the job of guaranteeing access to good food. However, complaints about volatile and rising food prices continue to be a feature of everyday life according to the research from 2013. This will surprise policy makers; in world markets the overall impression was of falling prices, improving stock levels, and (perhaps premature) optimism that price volatility – that has been so marked since 2006 – was coming to an end. Both the FAO and World Bank composite indices show average global food prices were lower in 2013 than in 2012 or 2011. Generally favourable weather conditions and stock levels, particularly in the main exporting

countries, kept staple prices down. Soya bean was the only major food commodity group for which prices rose. It helped that oil prices, a major driver of higher prices in previous years, did not rise much overall, and fertilizer prices dropped. But even with such favourable conditions, world food prices remained high in real and nominal terms. By the end of 2013 the FAO and World Bank indices were still only 14 and 17 per cent below their all-time highs (see Figure 1).

National market prices partly reflect these shifts towards stable and lower prices compared to recent years. Prices are still high compared to pre-2006 levels, but FAO national figures indicate they moved only slightly in 2013 in most of the countries in this study. However, *local* prices reported in the research communities were often high, increasing and unaffordable. Global, national, and local prices may diverge because:

- international price data focus on staple carbohydrates, but diets include sources of protein, fat, and micronutrient-rich foods;
- official data sources often monitor wholesale rather than retail prices – as recorded in previous years, people believe that retailers can, and do, raise prices regardless of underlying costs;
- idiosyncratic and localized factors such as weather events influence local market prices;
- local markets are integrated into global markets to different degrees, so the level of price transmission from global and national markets to local prices will be uneven (as was discussed in more detail in last year's report, *Squeezed*).

When we look at food and consumer price indices (CPI), we get a picture that contrasts starkly with the global panorama. Both food and general consumer prices have increased in *all* the ten countries since early 2012, particularly in Ethiopia and Pakistan. Only in Bangladesh did food prices rise more slowly than general consumer prices.

Who is accountable for hunger?

So what can be done to make food security policies and programmes more accountable to those who need them most? The research findings point to weak mechanisms of accountability in relation to the regulation of food markets, food- and cash-transfer schemes, and support to agricultural production, processing and marketing across a range of contexts.

From analyses of other public services such as health and education, we know public services can be accountable when they have i) a clear mandate for action, ii) standards for policies and programmes, iii) systems for monitoring the situation, and iv) sanctions for failures to act. What communities tell us about food security programmes is that responsibilities for action are unclear and monitoring systems rarely capture local realities. Standards are strikingly low judged against those of human rights, targeting efficiency, or protection. Food security programmes are often demeaning, divisive, unreliable, discriminatory and discretionary. There are no sanctions or actions against officials who fail to do their duty. People see no prospects for enforcing responsibilities to ensure food security at the local level. Somewhat forlornly, they instead trust that governments that neglect hungry voters will not be re-elected.

Governments in food insecure countries can act by putting accountability at the heart of their food policies. This means first publicly accepting the mandate to realize the right to food, as with Brazil's Zero Fome. People at risk of hunger must be able to clarify what that means through mobilization and real participation in food policy making. But it is not enough for the state to declare the Right to Food, if this does not result in standards and procedures for the delivery of food security policies and programmes. In Kenya, the 2010 constitution declares the Right to Food but already people have been turned away when trying to claim relief food from local chiefs. People at risk of hunger must participate in setting standards for programmes and policies – establishing what the right to food means in practice, in terms of how much of which foodstuff is needed, and how it will be delivered. Rather than only tracking production levels and prices, monitoring systems should be redesigned to follow how well people are eating. This is

now being done under the new policy in Indonesia. These systems can develop qualitative and localized indicators, developing local monitoring capacities to help strengthen the feedback loop.

Monitoring systems will only matter if governments use them to be more responsive. This includes enforcing action against officials who fail in their duty. In countries where a majority of the population is food insecure, there are numerous political economy incentives for the government to act on food security. Research participants in Bangladesh explained that those at risk of hunger (an important proportion of the electorate in developing countries), judge governments on their ability to provide food security.

Human rights defenders, social movements and progressive NGOs can do more to stimulate public debate about the right to food. This can include legal action to establish what it means, as in the landmark Indian case. In Kenya, awareness of the right to food increased after the information campaigns around the vote on the new constitution in 2010. In Zambia, NGOs and public radio are successfully stimulating food rights talk. **The mass media** plays a crucial role both in communicating ideas and shedding light on failures in food policy and provision. In Pakistan, the media is seen as the strongest force for holding the government to account for its failure to tackle food price rises. In India the mass media has helped the Right to Food movement there raise the visibility of the problem of hunger, and in so doing has made it costly for national and state governments to sit on their hands. In Indonesia, Oxfam has started building capacity of journalists to report on food and hunger issues. In Bangladesh, the leading daily newspaper regularly covers stories about food security and hunger.

Donors and NGOs both need to reflect on their own accountability in relation to food security, including thinking about what kinds of stand-alone initiatives they finance and support. Technical solutions are more prominent in food and nutrition security programming, but these seem to marginalize considerations of accountability. Flag-waving branded food security programmes may intend to strengthen accountability to the citizens and donors of rich countries by showing results and raising visibility. But do they strengthen accountability to those at risk of hunger? Do donor and NGO programmes undermine or support customary institutions of food security? To what extent do the principles of accountability, embedded in humanitarian programmes, shape food security policy and programming design?

Clarifying and claiming rights and responsibilities, wider participation in policy making spaces, and raising the visibility and costs of failures to protect against hunger can all do a great deal to promote a conducive environment in which people have the resources, power, and space to draw upon community and institutional support to achieve their food security. Without these benign conditions people will continue to be forced to fend for themselves in hostile times of global food insecurity.

1 INTRODUCTION

Help Yourself! Food Rights and Responsibilities reports the second year results from the *Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility* research project (see Box 2). It is an update on the situation reported in the Year 1 report for 2012, *Squeezed*. More details of the overall project approach, research sites, and methodology are available in *Squeezed*.

The body of the Year 2 report is in two parts. In keeping with remit to monitor changes in food prices, the first half focuses on what has happened with global and national food prices in the past year. It shows that world food prices looked stable and were lower in 2013, although local prices of many basic foods continued to be volatile and high.

The second half of the report summarizes the findings of the ‘special’ topic for this year: local accountability for food security. Recent price spikes and ‘food crises’ have drawn attention to the politics of food, raising questions about what it means in practice to have a right to food, who is responsible for protecting this right, and how is it enforced. Yet hunger and food security remain immune from the demands for accountability in other sectors of development. The United Nations’ Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food recently noted that, despite much progress towards tackling hunger and food insecurity since the 2008 food crisis, most initiatives fail the accountability test. Few have mechanisms for monitoring, for redress, or for participation in policy-making by small producers or consumers.¹

This research is intended to contribute to the growing debate on how to secure greater accountability against hunger by learning how accountability functions (or not) in local food security. It offers a unique perspective by hearing what people on low and precarious incomes have to say on the matter. The aim was to unearth and compare what the right to food means to different people in different settings, and to understand their experiences of food security policies and programmes – social protection (food- or cash-transfer) schemes, regulation of food markets, or subsidies or support for agriculture. Based on qualitative research with around 1500 people across 23 communities, and using established frameworks for the analysis of accountability mechanisms, the report looks at what different people in different settings said about:

- what the right to food meant to them;
- who they hold responsible for ensuring local food security or protecting against hunger;
- the standards and levels of acceptable provisioning;
- how local food security is monitored;
- the enforcement of responsibilities, and what happens when systems fail and people go hungry.

The report finds that many people at risk of hunger lack a strong sense of an enforceable right to food, however, there is a shared sense of a ‘natural right’ to food. This is usually expressed in terms of morality, religion, or social cohesion. At the same time, people at risk of hunger are receptive to state and civil society action that strengthens their sense of their right. In most communities there are many food security initiatives, but weak accountability mechanisms mean people do not feel secure against hunger. Schemes and policies are neither transparent nor enforceable, and in many instances cause division and social disruption. In conclusion, there is much that can be done to strengthen accountability for food security.

Box 2: Project overview

Changes in food prices are significant events in people's lives. With funding from UK Aid and Irish Aid, in 2012 a four-year project began to track the impact of changes on everyday life. The social costs of managing change when food prices rise or are volatile are often invisible to policy makers. Nutritional or poverty measures often suggest people have coped well and are 'resilient', but only because they neglect the costs of coping and resilience – more time and effort to feed and look after people; non-monetary effects on family, social, or gender relations; mental health costs such as stress; lower quality of life; feeling forced to eat 'foreign' or 'bad' food. These issues tend to be neglected in nutrition and poverty impact studies, but they matter a great deal to those affected.

Spanning the period 2012–2015, *Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility* aims to study how price changes affect the everyday lives of people on low or precarious incomes, looking at what is happening with paid work, unpaid care work or family responsibilities, how relationships are affected, and the resources with which people cope. The collective of researchers works in 10 urban/peri-urban and 13 rural locations across 10 low- to middle-income countries (see Figure 2).

Each year a synthesis report will outline the learning across these ten countries. These and other outputs are available online (www.oxfam.org.uk/foodprices).

Figure 2: Research locations



2 METHODS

The overall research methodology has been designed to enable analysis of the local impacts of complex global events and processes. The research will test a series of propositions about the impacts on dimensions of the wellbeing of different groups, through pathways triggered by changing food prices. More details of the overall project methodology are available in Annex 1 in *Squeezed*, the report on the Year 1 results.² Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility has three component activities:

1. Food security indicator tracking aimed at generating a picture of what has been happening to food security and food prices;
2. Qualitative research, with short annual visits to groups and households. Eight of the sites have been visited annually since 2009, and so 2013 was the fifth annual visit. In the remaining 15 sites, research was initiated in 2012. Details of the research sites are available in the Year 1 report. In each community, researchers follow at least ten households, conduct five key informant interviews, and hold focus group discussions with at least four different social and occupation groups. Other primary and secondary data is also gathered at the community level. In total, around 1500 people participate in the research each year;
3. Integrated qualitative and quantitative (Q2) analyses of the impacts of food price changes on wellbeing, drawing on nationally representative poverty data for each country. Findings from quantitative research will be integrated into the Year 3 and Year 4 reports.

Figure 3: Qualitative research ingredients

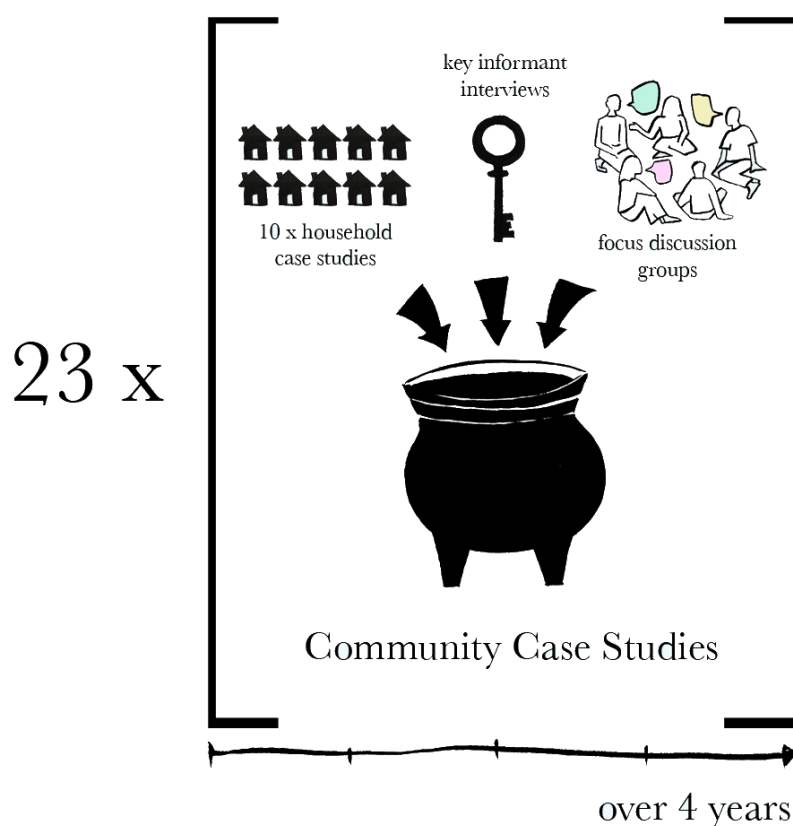


Illustration by Tessa Lewin

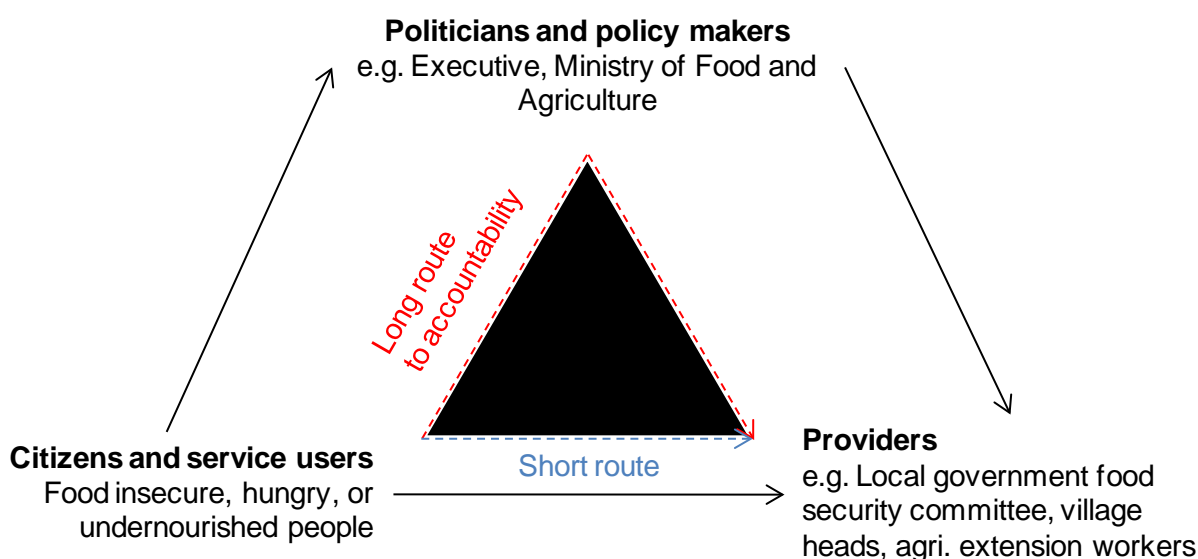
Researching accountability for hunger and food security

To research accountability for hunger, the methodology drew on the triangular conceptual framework developed for the 2004 World Development Report *Making Services Work for Poor People* (see Figure 4). This triangle summarizes the main relationships of accountability between three groups:

1. Citizens and politicians/policy makers: citizens mandate governments to protect food rights, set standards and monitor or create information, often via political parties, civil society action, donor influence, and even research like this;
2. Politicians/policy makers and frontline providers: policy makers set standards for performance, provide budgets and authority, set up information systems, monitor performance, and sanction failures;
3. Citizens and frontline providers: citizens make claims on providers, provide feedback about performance, and take direct action when services fail.

The focus of the field research was mainly on the third relationship. Yet whether or not there was a right to food and resources to match, and how frontline officials are monitored and sanctioned meant entering into the first and second political and policy-making relationships.

Figure 4: Conceptualizing relationships of accountability for food security



Source: Developed from World Bank (2003)

To study how accountability mechanisms were working at the local level, the researchers asked people what they thought hungry people were entitled to and what a 'right to food' meant to them. Participants also described their experiences of trying to access systems for complaining or taking action when support fell short of their expectations. The study adopted an accepted framework for analysing accountability mechanisms in public service delivery, which includes: i) the mandates or remits for action, ii) standards for programming or provision, iii) the existence of monitoring systems, and iv) enforcement or sanctions.³

Each country research team was provided with sample guides and topic lists, but these were adapted to make sense of the local language and context. Transcripts from interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed, translated into English, and coded using a common coding framework using NVivo 10 software.

3 FOOD PRICE MOVEMENTS IN 2013

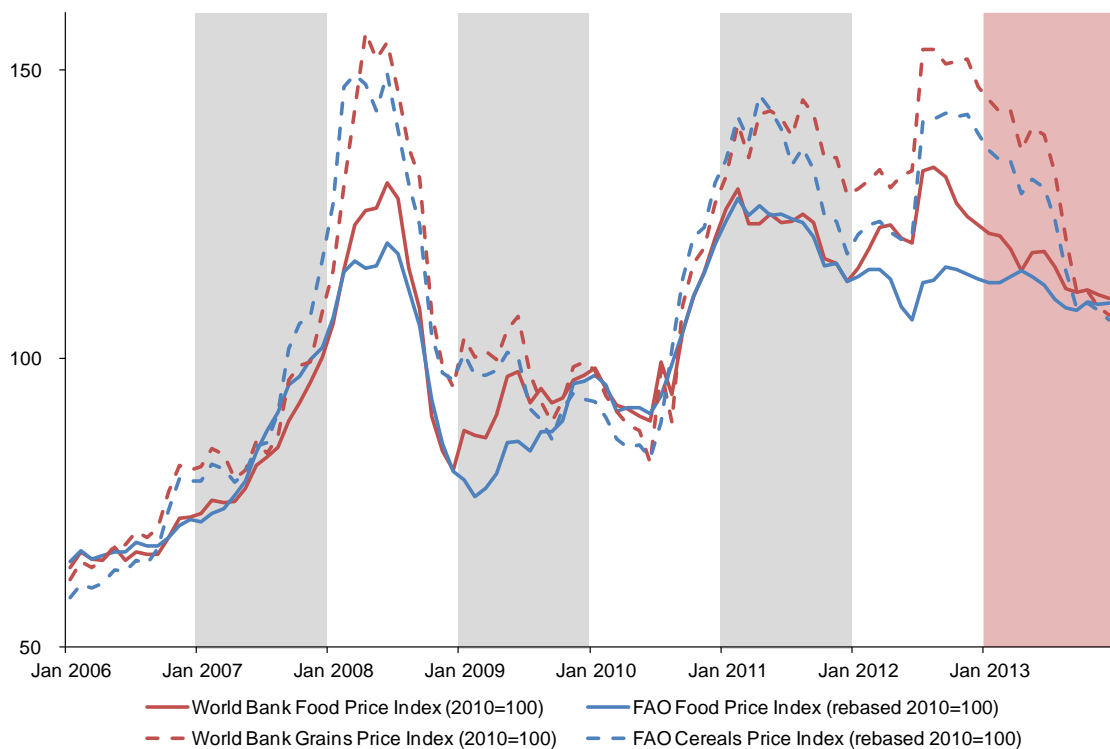
Global and local food price movements in 2013 were somewhat contradictory. In world markets the overall impression was one of falling prices and improving stock levels. There was even some (perhaps premature) suggestions of the beginning of the end for the turbulent conditions that have marked the years since 2006. Whilst this is partially reflected in some national markets, local market data (see Annex) and accounts from community research paint a more mixed picture with prices in some locations as disruptive as ever.

WORLD FOOD PRICES

Generally favourable weather conditions in main exporting countries explain much of the easing in global food prices during 2013. Global food prices were, on average, lower in 2013 than in 2012 and 2011 measured by the FAO and World Bank composite food price indices. Both indices recorded falls through the year, though they diverged in the first quarter as a result of significant increases in dairy prices, which receive a greater weighting in the FAO index.^{4,5}

The falls were especially pronounced on the respective cereals and grains sub-indices, which fell around 20 per cent between May and December, reflecting a generally favourable supply outlook, in particular for maize and rice (Figure 5).⁶

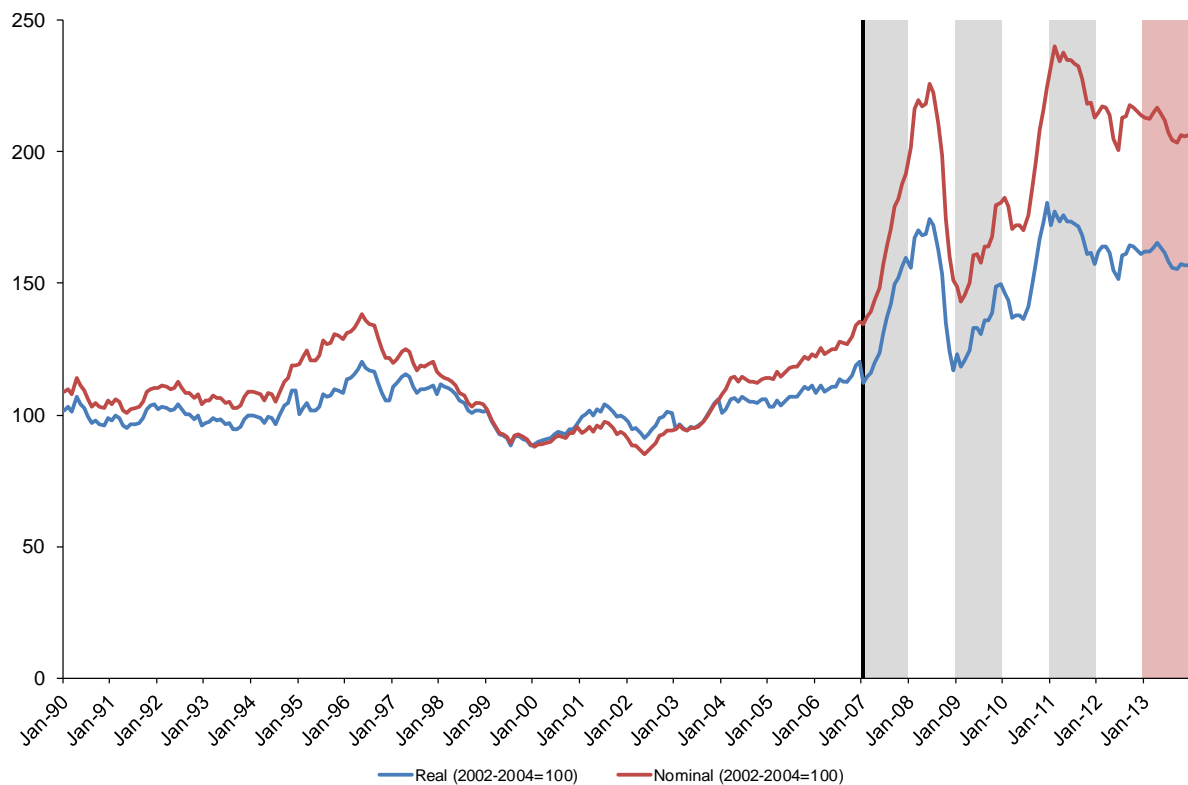
Figure 5: Food price indices decline in 2013, especially grains and cereals



Source: FAO Food Price Index, <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>; and World Bank, <http://databank.worldbank.org/>

Despite these declines, food prices still remain high in the historical context, both in real and nominal terms. In no month did index values fall below their post-2006 averages (Figure 6), and by the end of the year the FAO and World Bank indices were still only 14 and 17 per cent below their all-time highs.

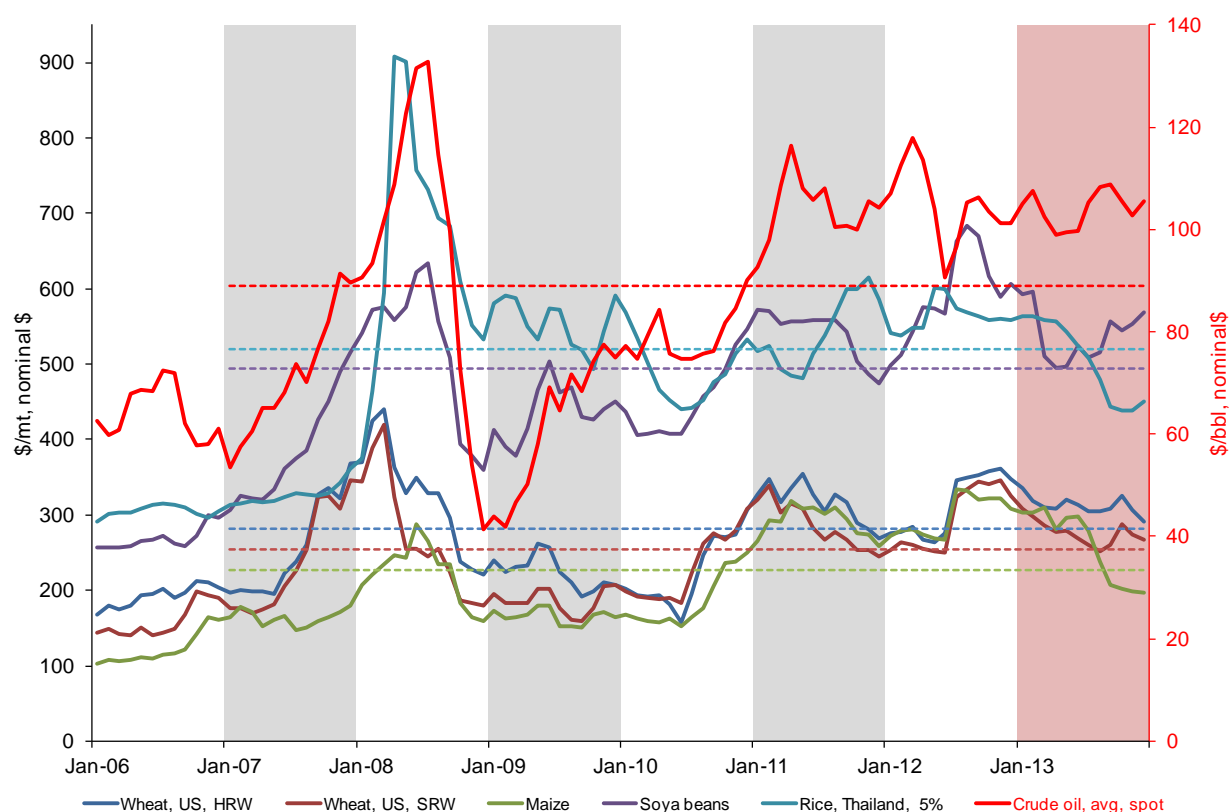
Figure 6: Real and nominal food prices remain high in historical terms



Source: FAO Food Price Index, <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>

The price dynamics of staple crops in 2013 varied. As suggested by the cereal and grain indices, the world market prices of wheat, maize, and rice were generally lower at the end of the year than at the start. This reflects record harvests, increasing availability of supplies, and stronger global stocks.⁷ In contrast, soya bean prices (though not soya bean oil prices, not illustrated here) rose after the first quarter (Figure 7). This was largely due to adverse weather in Brazil and Argentina and a tight US market.⁸ According to Baffes and Dennis,⁹ crude oil prices were the factor most responsible for food price changes from 1997–2004 to 2005–2012. These underwent some fluctuations through the year, but started and finished 2013 at similar levels (\$105/barrel). However, these price movements did not translate to fertilizer prices, which declined throughout the year. Compared to other years since 2006, the movements in oil prices in 2013 were comparatively benign.

Figure 7: World cereal prices fall, mixed picture for soya beans and crude oil



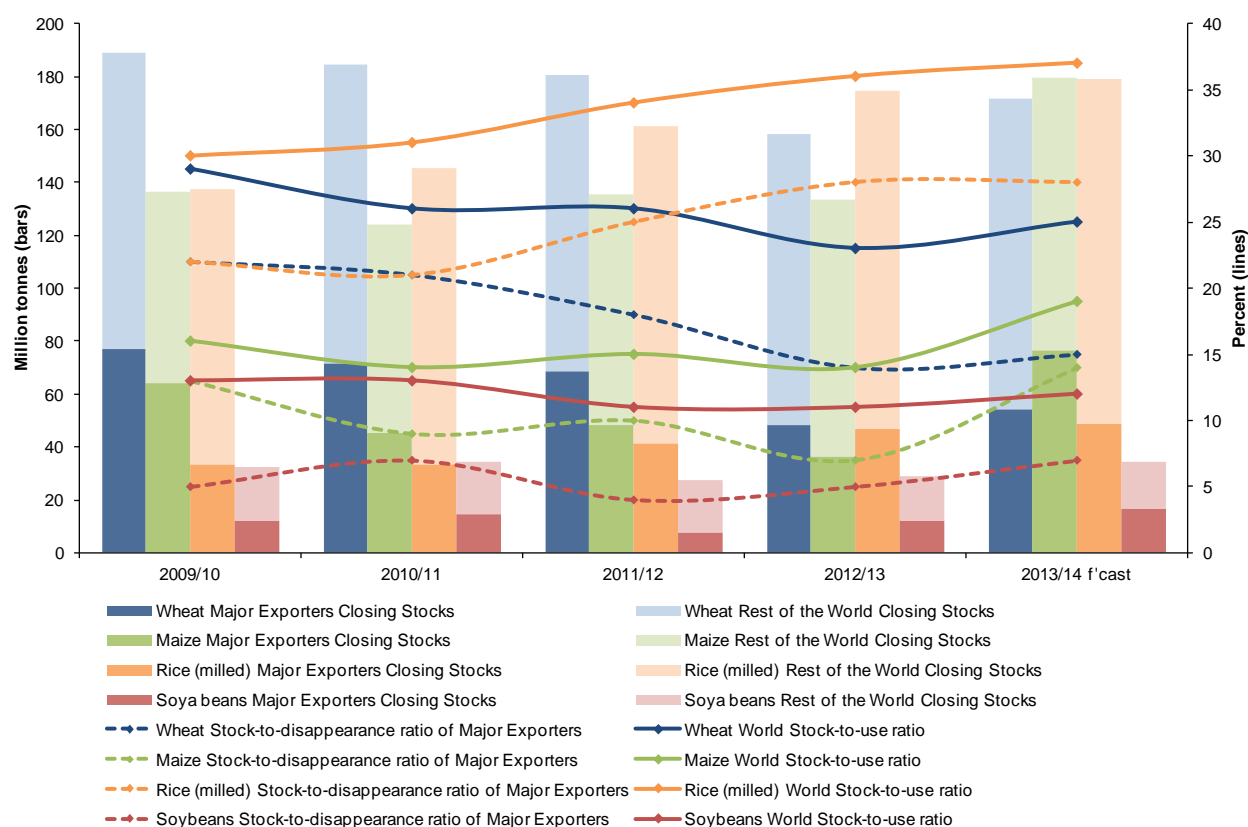
Note: Dotted lines: 2007–2013 average prices

Source: World Bank, <http://databank.worldbank.org/>

In terms of volatility, world market prices of staple foods were relatively stable. Adopting the measure of volatility employed by IFPRI's Excessive Food Price Variability Early Warning System,¹⁰ at no point in 2013 were the Chicago Board of Trade prices, for any of the five staples measured (hard and soft wheat, maize, rice, soya beans), 'excessively' volatile.¹¹

The improving situation for the level and stability of prices is reflective of improving stock levels due to few major production shocks in 2013. This will provide a buffer against future harvest shocks, and potentially dampen future price escalation. Stocks, both for major exporters and globally, are forecast to be higher in 2013/14 than in recent years, especially for maize and rice. Stock-to-use ratios are also improving, further reducing pressure on supplies. Figure 8 illustrates the absolute stock levels for four major crops over the last few years, both for major exporting countries and globally. It also shows ratios between these stocks and crop usage.

Figure 8: Improving stock levels and stock-to-use ratios for staple crops provide a buffer against future shocks



Source: AMIS, <http://www.amis-outlook.org/index.php?id=40187>

The World Bank projects a further 3.7 per cent decline in food prices and a drop in fertilizer prices of almost 12 per cent in 2014, on top of the 17.4 per cent decline in 2013.¹² However, there are still short-term downside threats from poor weather conditions in major producing and exporting countries as well as higher oil prices.¹³ These risks are reflected in the early 2014 indices. The FAO Food Price Index was up 2.6 per cent (month-on-month) in February 2014, the sharpest monthly increase since mid-2012. This reflects sugar crop damage from dry weather in Brazil, concerns over dry weather in some major vegetable oil production areas in South-East Asia, and concerns over wheat crops in the US.¹⁴ In the longer term, McKinsey analysis suggests threats will come in the form of increasing consumer demand, climate and eco-system risks, urban growth, and increasing biofuel demand. McKinsey conclude that the resource 'supercycle' of sharp price rises and heightened volatility is alive and well.¹⁵ The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) reach a different conclusion, suggesting that cereal markets appear to be emerging from a turbulent five years, adjusting downward to expected levels.¹⁶

The prevalence of chronic undernourishment also continues to improve slowly and marginally. Estimates suggest that 842 million people globally were undernourished in 2011–2013. This is fewer than in 2010–2012 (854 million, according to revised estimates),¹⁷ and is indicative of a slowly improving global food security situation. However, it would be wrong to ascribe too much of these changes in chronic hunger to the dynamics of global food markets in 2013. The development of the IPC chronic food insecurity scale¹⁸ should assist with better understanding of chronic food insecurity patterns, but not acute shocks. The development of the FAO's Voices of the Hungry project will measure food security annually through people's direct experiences in more than 150 countries in 2014. This will hopefully soon help in understanding the links between market dynamics and experiential food insecurity, including acute shocks, which are not captured under existing metrics.¹⁹

Box 3: Global Policy Developments

Though there were several national-level policy developments in major agricultural markets that will have a bearing on global market dynamics,²⁰ the most significant policy movements, or inertias, were probably those related to biofuels and commodity speculation.

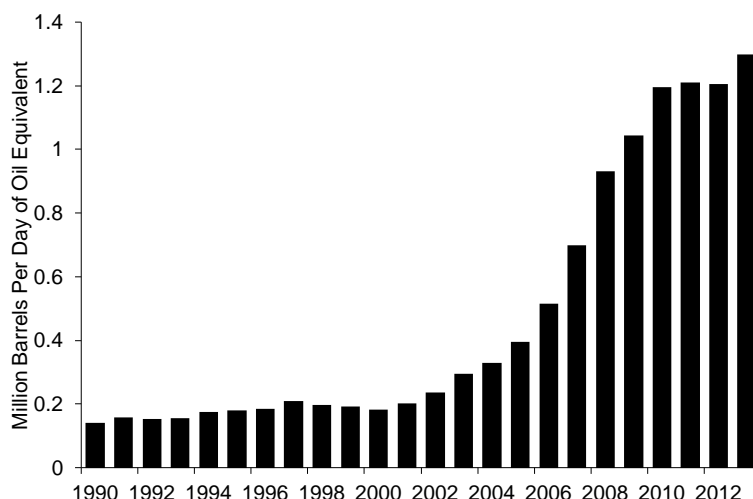
Biofuels

Estimates of the impact of biofuels on food prices vary significantly.^{21,22} However, a report by the UN High Level Panel of Experts, published in 2013, is unequivocal in asserting that 'Everything else being equal, the introduction of a rigid biofuel demand does affect food commodity prices,' and that 'in the last few years (since 2004) of short-term commodity food price increase, biofuels did play an important role'.²³ Biofuel production has increased dramatically since the beginning of the century (Figure 9). In this context, in October 2013 the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) was the first UN forum to discuss biofuels in detail. The aim was to agree collective action to ensure that policies, operations and investments in biofuels will not further food insecurity. However, no concrete course of action was agreed and the insipid recommendations formulated lacked any specific policy actions on biofuels and food security.²⁴

In the EU in October, the European Parliament voted to impose a 6 per cent limit for counting food crop-based biofuels towards the 10 per cent target for renewable energy in transport fuels by 2020, but failed to reach agreement with the European Council.²⁵ Such a cap would, in any case, be far above current levels of consumption. The decision will now be postponed until the second half of 2014.

In the US in November, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a proposal for the 2014 renewable fuel standard, which, for the first time, slightly revised downward the federally-mandated level of corn-based ethanol in US fuel.²⁶ However, this proposal was driven more by declining gasoline consumption (preventing higher blends of biofuels), than by recognition of the cost of US corn ethanol expansion on people in developing countries (\$6.6bn over six years in higher corn prices, according to one estimate).²⁷ A final ruling is expected in the first half of 2014.

Figure 9: Biofuels production dramatically increased after 2000, but may now be stabilizing



Source: World Bank, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1304428586133/CommodityMarketsOutlook_January2014_Data_Supplement.xlsx

Financial Speculation

At the start of 2014 the European Parliament and Council agreed to reform the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID). This includes the introduction of hard limits on speculation on all commodity derivatives (including from agricultural commodities) traded on European financial markets.²⁸ Position limits cap the number of over-the-counter (OTC) contracts in a particular commodity that can be held by a trader or group of traders. This prevents concentration by the individual or group concerned ensuring that speculators do not exert an excessive influence on prices. The reforms were formally approved in April 2014.

NATIONAL FOOD PRICES

Data from the World Food Programme give an indication of how consumers, in the ten countries we are researching, fared in 2014 when global market prices were fairly benign. Table 1 shows the quarterly change in the cost of food basket prices accounted for by staple foods. For example, in the last quarter of 2013 the prices of sorghum, millet, and maize (the main staples) in Burkina Faso collectively contributed to a 1 per cent increase in the overall cost of the food basket.²⁹ Prices in a number of the countries fell or increased moderately, especially towards the end of the year, with notable exceptions in Bangladesh and Bolivia. Table 2, however, compares these prices with longer-term baselines. **Relative to recent history, prices still remain high** (though not significantly so in Burkina Faso).

Table 1: Cumulative impact of main staple food price changes on cost of the food basket, relative to previous quarter

	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
BFA	5	4	-2	-2	-5	-3	-5	1
BGD	11	-7	-9	-3	21	7	4	4
ETH	4	0	-1	0	6	-4	-1	7
GTM	1	-11	-2	-1	0	-2	-1	0
IDN	5	0	0	-2	3	0	-1	-1
KEN	-13	0	3	-1	-4	-4	-3	-1
PAK	5	2	-1	0	7	-3	4	1
VNM								
ZMB	-3	8	4	0	1	9	3	-4

No data Low (< 0%) Moderate (0-5%) High (5-10%) Severe (> 10%)

Note: Tables 1 and 2 assume that the caloric contribution of the main staples monitored are proxies of the relative importance of the food items in the food basket.

Source: World Food Programme (WFP), *The Market Monitor*, <http://www.wfp.org/content/market-monitor>

Table 2: Cumulative impact of main staple food price changes on cost of the food basket, relative to baseline

	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
BFA	42	49	45	45	36	9	0	2
BGD	54	42	28	25	52	5	9	13
ETH	98	102	97	98	113	16	15	25
GTM	N/A	5	19	19	16	17	17	17
IDN	68	67	66	61	70	20	18	17
KEN	43	53	61	50	41	21	17	16
PAK	58	62	59	60	76	13	17	17
VNM								
ZMB	12	19	26	27	67	13	19	14

No data Low (< 25%) Moderate (25-50%) High (50-75%) Severe (> 75%) Low (< 0%) Moderate (0-5%) High (5-10%) Severe (> 10%)

Note 1: Qualitative assessment of category thresholds reclassified in 2013 Q1, prior thresholds have been adjusted for consistency.

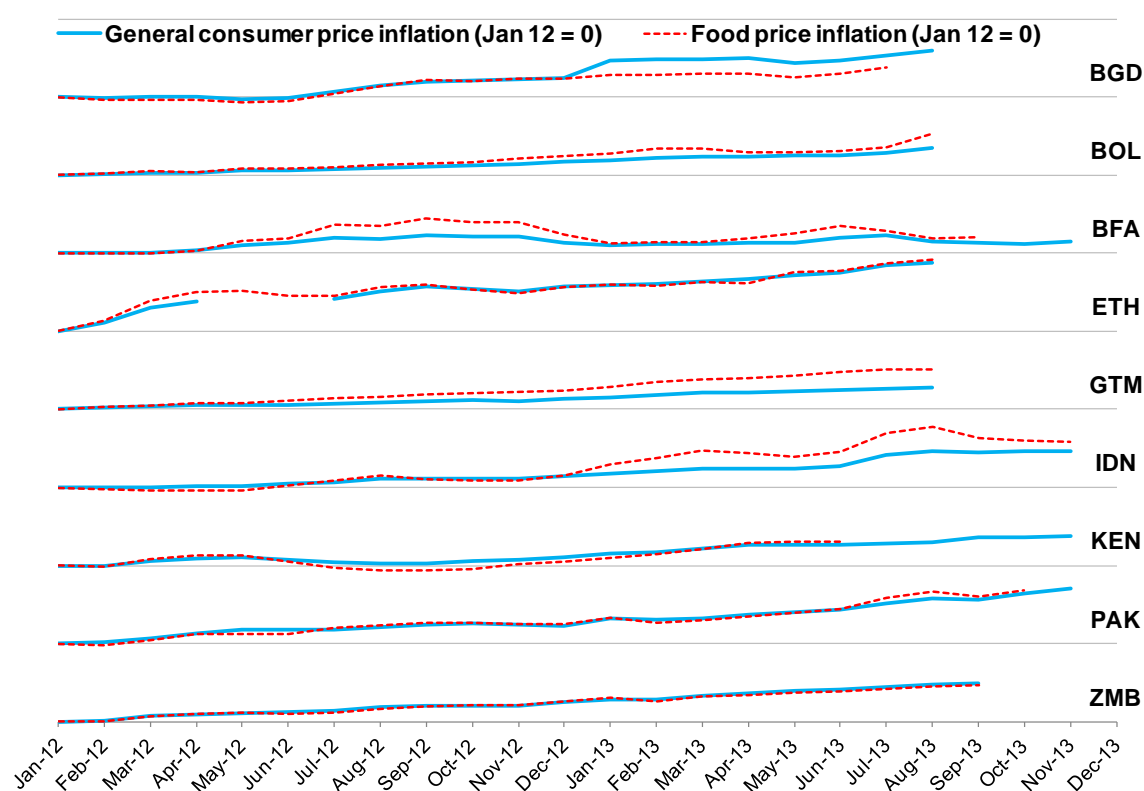
Note 2: To take into account global structural changes resulting in volatile food prices, the baseline period changed as of 2013 Q2 from the 2003–2007 five-year average to a moving period covering the previous five years of the same quarter (e.g. 2008 Q2 to 2012 Q2). However, available data for the baseline period does not always cover the whole five years. Pre-2013 Q2 values should not, therefore, be compared with those for 2013 Q2 onwards.

Source: World Food Programme (WFP), *The Market Monitor*, <http://www.wfp.org/content/market-monitor>

These tables and the data presented in the preceding section are not particularly alarming, although Table 2 clearly shows staple food prices are still elevated. However, the experience of research respondents in some communities suggests that the prices in local markets were often high, increasing, and problematic. This is explained by at least four factors. First, these tables and, to a large extent, the international price data are concerned with staple carbohydrate crops, whereas people's food baskets, where possible, will also be comprised of protein, fat, and micronutrient-rich food sources subject to price movements not captured here. Second, official data sources often monitor wholesale rather than retail prices. Retail prices may be subject to greater increases than wholesale prices as a result of shopkeepers unilaterally increasing their margins. Third, idiosyncratic and localized factors, such as weather events, which won't affect global or even other national market prices, may nonetheless have a significant bearing on local market prices. Fourth, local markets have differing levels of exposure to global markets due to factors such as physical infrastructure and policy impacts (e.g. imposition of VAT on food items, trade policy, changes in fuel and input subsidies). Therefore, the level of price transmission from global and national markets to local prices will be uneven. Last year's report *Squeezed* contains more detail on this.

The first two of these factors are better represented in Figure 10, which shows that both food and general consumer prices have increased in all countries since the start of 2012, most noticeably in Ethiopia and Pakistan. Only in Bangladesh has the rise in food prices lagged behind the general increase in CPI. So, even though a large share of most household income is spent on food purchases, people are also being squeezed by rising prices of other basic needs as well.

Figure 10: Food and general consumer price inflation 2012–2013



Note: the range for each country is 0-25%. No data available for Vietnam

Source: http://laborsta.ilo.org/sti/EN/SUB/CPI_TCPI_IN.xls

The report now briefly considers 2013 price movements in seven of the countries researched. It then addresses, in more detail, the picture in Bangladesh, Kenya, and Pakistan. Food price charts and other food security indicators for each country are presented in the Annex.

Bangladesh

Staple food prices in Bangladesh rose considerably during 2013. At the end of 2013 retail rice prices in Dhaka were about the same (in nominal terms) as they were at the period of peak prices in 2008, although national average prices were about 7 per cent below 2008 peak levels. In Dhaka, prices of lentils (a key source of protein) were about 11 per cent higher (in nominal terms) in late 2013 than at their 2008 peak.³⁰ In Dhaka there was also no sign of a reduction in prices immediately following major harvests as might be expected, although national average data do show such a trend. The overall increases in rice prices occurred despite the fact that overall rice production was about the same as in the previous year (almost 34 million tonnes). Supply disruptions due to *hartals* (strikes) linked to adversarial political protests in the pre-election period, and increases in transport costs due to a fuel price hike in January 2013, are cited as some of the reasons for food price increases in the early part of 2013.³¹

Bolivia

Prices rose in Bolivia during 2013, partly due to lower production levels related to weather events, which were more intense than in 2012. Maize and rice production were both estimated to decline by 13 per cent compared to 2012, and wheat production by 4 per cent.³² In December 2013, the year-on-year CPI was 6.5 per cent above 2012 (in line with Ministry of Economy and Public Finance projections), while the food CPI was 10.4 per cent higher.³³ The Bolivian Government lowered tariffs on imported food products during the year in addition to implementing a series of measures through EMAPA (the state owned Food Production Support Company) and these may have ameliorated some of the increase in prices.³⁴ In addition, the government subsidized bread prices and these remained relatively stable during the year.³⁵ Vegetables, tubers (especially potatoes), rice, chicken, beef, and wheat flour prices all increased, while milk and sugar prices remained stable or declined.³⁶

Burkina Faso

Prices of most food crops were relatively stable during the year. Harvests of millet, maize, and sorghum were better in 2013 than in 2012. Aggregate cereals output was estimated at 21 per cent above the average for the previous five years.³⁷ The price of imported rice was generally stable throughout the year. Millet prices in Ouagadougou rose only marginally during the lean season, but ended the year lower than at the start. In October 2013 they were 2.4 per cent lower than in October 2012 while sorghum and maize prices were 6 per cent and 12.9 per cent lower respectively. However, millet prices across the country are still 5–25 per cent above the five-year average.³⁸

Ethiopia

Cereal production in the main 'meher' harvest (starting November) reached about 23 million tonnes, 10 per cent above 2012 levels. However, the smaller 'belg' harvest (March to July) was relatively poor. This resulted in climbing cereal prices between March and November 2013. They began to decline after the meher harvest reached local markets.³⁹

In November in Addis Ababa, prices of maize, wheat, and red sorghum were 42, 25, and 49 per cent respectively above November 2012 levels, although they started to decline thereafter. A similar pattern was observed for wholesale maize prices in Mekelle (northern Ethiopia) and Dire Dawa (eastern Ethiopia). Wholesale teff prices in Addis Ababa were about 4 per cent higher at the end of 2013 than at the start, although in the pre-harvest period in October they were 15 per cent higher than in January. Overall, in December 2013, the year-on-year CPI increased by 7.7 per cent and the food CPI increased by 5.9 per cent. The cumulative impact of these increases

is reflected in the cost of the basic food basket. There was an increase of 25 per cent compared with the baseline (2008–2012).⁴⁰

Guatemala

Wholesale prices of the major food staples – black beans, rice, and white and yellow maize – were all lower at the end of 2013 than at the start, although they fluctuated during the year. Good harvests of white maize and black beans contributed to the decline in wholesale prices.⁴¹ However, retail prices of maize tortillas and bread were higher by 8 and 5 per cent respectively in the final quarter of 2013 compared with the previous year. Overall, the cost of the basic food basket in the final quarter was 17 per cent above the baseline of 2008–2012.⁴²

Indonesia

Retail rice prices were relatively stable throughout the year with some minor fluctuations, and in the final quarter they were 4 per cent above price levels in the final quarter of 2012. Rice production for 2013 was estimated at a record level of 71 million tonnes.⁴³ However, maize production was about 5 per cent lower than in 2012 and resulted in increased levels of maize imports. Despite the high levels of rice production, year-on-year food inflation in December 2013 was 11.4 per cent.⁴⁴ The price of the basic food basket in the final quarter of 2013 was 17 per cent above the baseline (2008–2012).⁴⁵

Kenya

Data in Table 1 suggest that prices of basic commodities in Kenya fell during 2013. Yet the research participants, particularly in Mukuru, faced significant price increases at certain times of the year. Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) stated in early 2013 that national average wholesale maize prices were 60–80 per cent above the five-year average.⁴⁶ Price changes varied in different locations in Kenya over the year. For example, wholesale maize and beans prices increased by about 9 and 10 per cent respectively in Eldoret and Kisumu, with fluctuations during the year.

A major factor contributing to increased food prices during 2013 was the introduction of the VAT Act which was implemented from early September at a rate of 16 per cent. Some food items were exempt from VAT after civil society protests but not all shop owners re-adjusted prices downwards after the exemption decision. Other important basic items, including electricity, cooking gas, textbooks, animal feed, and fertilizer, also had VAT introduced and prices, therefore, rose significantly. These increases also fed through to higher rents in urban areas. The overall CPI for Kenya in the third quarter, when field research was conducted, was 8.3 per cent above 2012 levels, and the food CPI was 12.5 per cent higher, largely due to the impact of the VAT Act.⁴⁷ WFP surveys show that food prices in the third quarter were 17 per cent above the third quarter average for 2008–2012.⁴⁸

Pakistan

Data in Table 1 show national price increases in three out of four quarters during 2013; this accords with, but perhaps understates, the extent of price increases found in the research areas.

In 2013, the retail price of wheat flour in Karachi increased by 15 per cent despite a reasonable wheat harvest.⁴⁹ By December, they were (in nominal terms) 36 per cent higher than at their peak in 2008. A number of factors are contributing to this increase, including government procurement prices, transmission effects of global food prices, lower wheat stocks, and high fuel prices.⁵⁰ Basmati rice prices increased by about 15 per cent over the year and IRR1 rice prices by almost 10 per cent. Rice prices appear to be still affected by the significant (27 per cent) drop in production resulting from the 2010 floods.⁵¹ Rice consumption, however, comprises only a small proportion of the food basket of poor households in Pakistan, whereas the increase in wheat flour prices has a disproportionate impact on the poor. The purchasing power of

households declined in 2013. Daily wages of unskilled labour stayed about the same during 2012–2013 while food prices increased. In October 2013, the terms of trade for day labourers (amount of wheat flour that could be purchased with a day's wage) had declined by 8 per cent compared with October 2012.⁵²

Vietnam

Rice production in 2013 was expected to reach a record level of about 44.1 million tonnes.⁵³ This contributed to wholesale and retail rice prices remaining relatively stable during the year, although there was a modest increase towards the end of the year. This is attributed to strong export demand particularly from China and the Philippines. Overall, however, prices in December 2013 were lower than their levels one year earlier, whereas the overall CPI over the same period had increased by 6.0 per cent.⁵⁴

Zambia

Maize production in 2013 was estimated at about 2.6 million tonnes, 11 per cent below the good harvest of 2012.⁵⁵ Although maize supplies were estimated to be adequate to meet domestic needs and provide a small exportable surplus, the Zambian Government imposed export restrictions during the year. The government also removed maize and fuel subsidies, and reduced the fertilizer subsidy. Not surprisingly, prices of white maize, breakfast meal, and roller meal all rose. By December, maize meal prices were about 20 per cent higher than one year earlier, and white maize retail prices were 35 per cent higher. By the last quarter of 2013, the cost of the basic food basket had risen by 14 per cent from the baseline (2008–2012).⁵⁶

Summary

In summary, national price movements can clearly diverge from global prices due to a variety of country-specific factors. In turn, price changes in different communities, and the impacts of such changes on households, are far more varied in space and time than national average data reveal. This is explored further in case studies from research sites in Bangladesh, Kenya, and Pakistan, which examine changes to prices and how people were eating in 2013 (published online to accompany this report). The case studies indicate that, despite a relatively stable international price environment, at national and local levels price increases are still occurring for food and other essential items and are having significant negative impacts on nutrition and overall wellbeing. They also demonstrate that politics and policies have a significant impact on prices: governments can directly (for good or ill) influence the wellbeing of the poor through decisions on policy instruments such as taxation and levels of subsidies. Finally, there is some evidence that prices in rural agricultural areas are more influenced by seasonal supply and demand factors than prices in urban areas. In principle, rural producers may benefit from higher prices, but that is not usually the case for small producers who are still net consumers of basic food commodities.

4 FOOD RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WHY WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR HUNGER

Accountability for local food security is the special theme of this year's *Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility* report. In 2013 we asked: how accountable are food security policies and programmes from the bottom-up? How do people understand the right to food? Who is responsible for realizing that right? How are they held to account?

This theme was chosen because recent price spikes and 'food crises' have drawn attention to the politics of accountability for food security. International and national discourses on hunger increasingly focus on human rights as the basis for accountability for food security. The debate about the 'Right to Food' – what it means, and how it is to be realized – is gathering momentum with the successes of social movements against hunger in Brazil and India.⁵⁷ Yet the right to food is likely to have different meanings in different settings and, therefore, different policy and practical implications. Knowledge of these differences may help to explain why some governments are more accountable for action against hunger than others. The nature of this research design meant it could best contribute to this debate by uncovering variations in the meaning of the right to food and responsibilities for action against hunger across the 10 different national and 23 local settings.

The research was designed to uncover how rights and responsibilities, in relation to food security, feature in the political cultures of the communities studied. The study analyzed the views of participants on food rights and responsibilities given their differing contexts both in terms of the legal responsibilities of the state and the food security outcomes in their locations. Analysis focused on the idea of 'provisioning' – on how people secure the essential foodstuffs they need to live everyday life – rather than on how effectively food markets or production or regulatory systems function. How well people are eating (by their own standards) is a key metric of success in any food system, and so to think about provisioning rather than efficiency, cost, sustainability or anything else seemed sensible.

The findings are presented here unpolished and imperfect, yet (we feel) sufficiently weighty and stimulating to contribute to how we think about accountability for food security. The usual health warnings apply: the research did not always succeed in exploring food rights and responsibilities in precisely the ways we wanted. These are complex matters, and the language and meanings of rights and accountability around food tend to be contextual matters, sensitive to translation and interpretation. Yet the study also showed that **in most societies there are shared understandings of the rights to and responsibilities for protection against hunger, particularly for the most vulnerable**. Formal systems of accountability for food security have not replaced customary rights and responsibilities for protecting against hunger, and they vary in their strength and capacity. This is despite some quite rapid advances towards securing rights to food within human rights thinking and practice in the past decade. More localized and kin- or community-based systems of provisioning are themselves affected by rapid changes in food prices, and by related changes in what people eat, where they shop, who produces and how, the length of marketing chains, as well as the regulation and governance of food. A blend of common custom, local and domestic politics, and international law shapes accountability for hunger at the local level.

To understand these issues, we asked people on low and precarious incomes in the range of research settings – 23 communities in 10 countries – whether and how the food system they are part of is accountable. Drawing on the literature on accountability, public services and human development,⁵⁸ participants were asked about:

- what a right to food means;
- responsibilities or mandates for ensuring food security or protecting against hunger;
- views on standards and levels of acceptable provisioning;
- how local food security is monitored;
- how responsibilities are enforced, and what happens when systems fail.

Box 4: Is there such a thing as a right to food?

'Is there any right for the hungry here?

No. If there was then no one would have gone hungry.

Where do these rights come from? How do you know about these rights?

I do not know.

What do you understand by food rights?

Food right means no one will go unfed.'

Mrs A., 28, housewife and mother of three, Khulna, southern Bangladesh

'Do hungry people have any rights to food here?

There is no such right in this country.'

Participant in focus group discussion (FGD) of female merchants in Kami, urban Cochabamba, Bolivia

'Do you know anything about rights?

I don't know whether the word 'right' is officially written anywhere in Bangladesh.'

Mr K., 29, garment worker, participant in FGD with men in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Differences in the findings help us to understand how different systems are configured and in turn how different configurations influence people's expectations and sense of entitlement. Governments and societies differ a great deal in the degree and nature of responsibility they shoulder for ensuring food security, as well as in how they choose to do that in practice (Box 7). From this research exercise, there are three main lessons about the politics of food and hunger in contemporary low- and middle-income countries (more will be discussed in a forthcoming paper dedicated to this topic):

1. Most societies have shared understandings of the rights to, and responsibilities for, protection against hunger, particularly for the most vulnerable. These derive from natural rights, moral and religious principles, and membership of society. They imply responsibilities of fathers, families, communities, etc. But the idea of a universal legal human right with enforceable claims is rare, existing only where states explicitly accept a mandate for tackling hunger (and then usually in theory more than in practice).
2. A wide array of policies, programmes, schemes, and customs, international, national and local, are in place in most communities, which affords some protection against hunger. Reflecting that the forces driving food insecurity are increasingly out of the hands of individuals, effort and resources are being spent on action against hunger, much of it relatively new (past five years).

3. Yet despite its scale and plural nature, this patchwork of provision does not amount to an accountable system for protecting against hunger or food insecurity. With some honourable exceptions, the patchwork reflects instead the fact that there are considerable obstacles to people realizing their rights to food. Customary systems are patchy and uneven at the best of times, but are themselves weakened by rapid changes in food prices and responses to them. Public action has scaled up, and there are policies and schemes that people feel work for them, more in some places than in others; yet many are criticized as discriminatory, discretionary, demeaning, unreliable, and divisive.

Box 5: Who is responsible for ensuring rights to food?

'Primary responsibility lies with the parents. If the parents fail, the immediate family relatives should come in. If the relatives fail, then the community comes in. If the community fails then government should come in. The government is the last resort.'

Mr M., 42, district social welfare officer, Chikwanda, Zambia

'I have lived not to depend upon the government to help me so I would advise all those who are crying for the government to help you, to seek help elsewhere because it may never come.'

Mr C., 65, clothes seller, participant in a FGD with men in Mukuru, Kenya

'Will man die from starvation? Don't we give them votes? We have elected them, so it's their turn to provide us with food.'

Mrs H., 70, beggar and grandmother of two, Dhaka, Bangladesh

'The government gives us those rights even those of us who live in the middle of the bushes pay taxes therefore we are guaranteed of these rights.'

Mr K., 36, maize farmer and father of three, Lango Baya, Kenya

'When the child becomes hungry, it cries to his/her mother. When the people are hungry, they report it to the government.'

Mr A., 41, farmer and widower with six dependents, Oromia, Ethiopia

WHAT IS A 'RIGHT TO FOOD'?

The human right to adequate food is recognized under international law, most comprehensively by Article 11 of the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).⁵⁹ In 1996 the World Food Summit requested that the right to food be given more concrete and operational content (Box 6).

Box 6: Right to food initiatives following the 1996 World Food Summit

- 1999: UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the body of independent experts monitoring States' compliance with the ICESCR adopted General Comment No. 12 on the right to food. Whilst not legally binding in itself this is an authoritative interpretation of the ICESCR, which is legally binding upon the States Parties to this treaty.
- In 2000, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food was established by the Commission on Human Rights.
- In 2004 the 187 Member States of the General Council of the FAO adopted the 'Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security'. The 19 guidelines build on international law and are a set of recommendations on how to implement the obligations of States under Article 11 of ICESCR. The 2014 session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) will review progress made during the ten years since the Voluntary Guidelines came into being.

Source: <http://www.srfood.org/en/right-to-food>

In 1999, the CESCR General Comment summarized the normative content of the right to food as:

The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, have physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement. The right to adequate food shall therefore not be interpreted in a narrow or restrictive sense which equates it with a minimum package of calories, proteins and other specific nutrients. The right to adequate food will have to be realized progressively. However, States have a core obligation to take the necessary action to mitigate and alleviate hunger...even in times of natural or other disasters.

E/C.12/1999/5 (Paragraph 6)⁶⁰

In the interests of transparency it is important to say that in relation to discussions of rights in particular, the research results are likely to be sensitive to the approach taken. The study did not take an open-ended or minutely context-sensitive approach which might have yielded a more nuanced picture of varied local meanings, but specifically looked instead for the 'common sense' – shared understandings – about what food rights mean, in specific contexts. From the patterned differences and similarities across the contexts, an analysis was developed about why food rights are framed in the way they are in different contexts. This means that the findings are somewhat 'flattened' into shape by the line of questioning, which was similar in all the countries. This is in turn partly because of the scale of the comparative exercise. We revisit the same 1500 people, in the same 23 communities in 10 countries each year. Fifteen languages are spoken so there must be a common set of concepts and tools to be able to talk about the same thing in each country. Researchers then interpret and adapt these concepts as appropriate in each local context. This seems to make sense given that the discourse and practice of human rights, and of a right to food specifically, come from the international and not the local context. As the quotations in Box 4 indicate, for many people the prospect of realizing a right to food was very unlikely.

But the sense that the research findings are partly conditional on what was asked, and how, is not only methodological self-critique. It also reflects the fact that a right to food is a nebulous notion – unless given specific content through a political struggle as in *Fome Zero* in Brazil or the Right to Food movement in India. A 'right' is a difficult concept with many potential meanings in popular thinking,⁶¹ and it applies uncertainly to food, eating, food systems, hunger, food security. (It is not the only social and economic right for which this is true, of course.) But does a right to food imply a universal entitlement to be fed? The right not to be evicted from one's land for so-called development purposes? Protection against shocks in the regular food system? Subsidies for production and consumption of food? Help with broader livelihood concerns...? Any and all of these meanings are reasonable interpretations, as indeed are others.

With the caveats that i) we are aware we are forcing our language of ‘rights to food’ onto people who may conceptualize and categorize these matters differently and ii) these are in themselves tricky issues to conceptualize and speak about, we think that the findings from the exercise are sufficiently rich and instructive to be worth exploring in some depth.

Box 7: HANCI score and constitutional provisions on the right to food

Table 3 provides some context by way of national-level commitments to addressing hunger, undernutrition, and upholding the right to food.

The Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI) scores governments on their political commitments to tackling hunger and undernutrition. For both hunger and undernutrition, indicators measure legal frameworks (including the level of constitutional protection of the right to food), policies, and programmes (for example the extent to which nutrition features in national development policies/strategies) and public expenditures (for example the proportion of government budgets spent on agriculture). The index assesses both curative action (efforts to address immediate needs) and preventive action (efforts to avert hunger and undernutrition in the first place).

The constitutional provisions on the right to food illustrate the strength and articulation of this right in national legislation. In Bolivia and Kenya there is explicit recognition of everyone’s right to food. In Guatemala the recognition is explicit, but only with regard to minors and the elderly. In four of the ten countries, the right to food is expressed more weakly through guaranteeing other human rights in which the right to food is implicit according to their normal meaning in international law. The remaining three countries, though not recognizing the right to food explicitly in their constitution, do make explicit reference to the right to food in the objectives or directive principles of state policy. These are statements of principle, often representing the values to which a society aspires, if not realizes. Whilst these statements may guide government action, they do not provide for individual or legal rights. Finally, several countries recognize the primacy of international law – including the right to food – over national legislation.

Table 3: Right to food, hunger, and political commitments in study countries

	Prevalence of undernutrition	HANCI score ⁱ	Constitutional provisions on the right to food				
			<i>Explicit</i>		<i>Implicit</i>	<i>Explicit</i>	<i>Implicit</i>
			Direct and general	Specific groups	Broader rights	Directive principle	Primacy, or equality, of international law
BFA	25.0%	198					✓
BGD	16.3%	190				✓	
BOL	21.3%	-	✓ ⁱⁱ		✓		✓
ETH	37.1%	160			✓	✓	✓ **
GTM	30.5%	240	✓	✓ ⁱⁱⁱ	✓		✓
IDN	9.1%	204				✓ ***	✓ *
KEN	25.8%	114	✓ ^{iv}				
PAK	17.2%	147			✓	✓	
VNM	8.3%	179					✓ **
ZMB	43.1%	176					

ⁱ HANCI commitment thresholds: High >201; Medium 176-201; Low 132-175; Very low <132.

ⁱⁱ Bolivia: (art.16) Every person has the right to water and food. The State has the obligation to guarantee food security for all through healthy, adequate and sufficient food.

ⁱⁱⁱ Guatemala: (art. 51) The State will protect the physical, mental and moral health of minors and the elderly. It will guarantee them their right to food, public health, education, security, and social insurance.

^{iv} Kenya (art.43(c)) Every person has the right ... to be free from hunger, and to have adequate food of acceptable quality.

* Recognizes international law as being applicable, but equal to national law (based on sources other than the constitution).

** The status of international law in the national legal hierarchy could not be clearly identified. Given that the majority of countries for which the status is known recognize the primacy of international law, the FAO conclude it is likely that international law will be superior or equal to the constitution in these countries. These countries have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

*** Indonesia passed a food bill into law in 2012 (<http://goo.gl/TbQyqB>).

HANCI data for 2012, constitutional provisions as of 31 Dec 2010.

Sources: <http://www.hancindex.org/>, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/ap554e/ap554e.pdf>

The content and origins of a right to food

The content of a right to food commonly coheres around an idea that people should have adequate food – nutritious in the sense of contributing to good health, and sufficient in quantity. Sufficient is such that people should be able to eat three good meals a day at best, and at the very least should not go hungry. Good health and the ability to do physical labour are some of the indications of how well people are eating. These are reasonably common shared assumptions.

Not everyone has clear ideas about a ‘right to food’. People speak of such ‘rights’ more easily in some places than in others. In the Indonesian communities studied, for instance, people found the concept unfamiliar and difficult to grasp. This may be because hunger is not seen as a significant problem in this middle-income country (although nutrition is, to a significant degree). The communities are themselves in relatively food surplus areas – two in Java, one in Southern Kalimantan – rather than any of the Indonesian provinces that regularly experience drought (e.g. Nusa Tenggara Timur). Younger people will have had little or no experience of mass or acute food insecurity. In the absence of any such realistic threats, it is not surprising that the idea of a ‘right to food’ was difficult to grasp. This point was underlined by the fact that some older people were able to grasp the concept specifically in relation to preventing famine, recalling past times when such events were within the realm of possibility. That the New Food Law of 2012 focuses on food sovereignty and does not mention the right to food may be either a cause or an effect of the absence of discussion on food rights in Indonesia.

By contrast, in Kenya, people readily acknowledged the concept and spoke easily about what a right to food meant to them. This partly reflects the recent public dialogue about a right to food during the development of the new constitution in 2010. The establishment of a constitutional right to food was not directly driven by the 2008 and 2010–2011 food price spikes, nor by the ongoing drought and chronic food insecurity in Kenya. However, the recent (and ongoing) experience of provisioning hardship helps explain why people living in or near poverty in the slum community of Mukuru in Nairobi and in the dry Lango Baya coastal area picked up on this aspect of the constitutional reform. Kenyans from educated and unschooled backgrounds, rural and urban, old and young, all mentioned citizenship and constitutional mandates on the right to food.

Where does such a right come from? It is here that variations in the politics of provisioning really come to light. As noted above, in the two Kenyan research sites, people spoke about the new constitution. They explained that they had rights to food because they were citizens and the government was responsible for protecting them from hunger because it is in the constitution. When a state has clearly and specifically taken on the responsibility to act on hunger, and communicates this to its population, and where it is reinforced in public discourse, this has a significant impact on people’s understandings of where their rights to food originate.

In the communities involved in this study, people in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Kenya, and Zambia were more likely to talk about the right to food as originating in constitutional law or in the responsibilities of a government or state. In Bolivia and Kenya, this was linked to a specific discourse about the right to food as a constitutional mandate. In Bangladesh, this drew on an enduring political culture and the state’s assumption of responsibilities to prevent hunger.

In Burkina Faso and Zambia, the right to food was thought to originate with government because of a history of acute food insecurity and (in particular in Zambia) efforts by NGOs to persuade people that they had such rights. People across these very varied food security systems felt the right to food had some basis in the state, however, that does not imply equal faith in the capacity or willingness of their states to act to prevent hunger. In Kenya and Zambia, in particular, people spoke about rights to food as theoretical, in some cases that the right to food did not exist because people went hungry. If people go hungry, how can such a right exist?

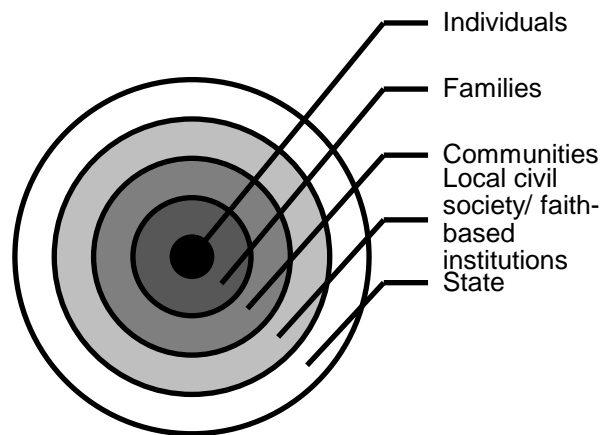
With some exceptions (such as Kenya), the idea that rights to food originated in state responsibilities and mandates were more usually articulated by urban and more educated people – key informants in public sector or representatives of civil society – within each community sample. A more widely shared common sense view on food rights across these contexts suggests a sense that the right to food is innate, and derives in an important sense from a kind of ‘natural law’. This emerged from a number of positions articulated across contexts. These included the idea that everyone has the right to food in some sense simply by virtue of being human, because food is necessary for survival or to be able to work. Everyone has the right to survive and to be able to work to maintain survival (and get food). Others suggested that a right to food superseded other civic obligations, arguing that theft or law-breaking were acceptable when food security was at risk. The idea that a right to food can be seen as innate or natural gives it a particular primordial power and heft compared to rights which are less critical for immediate survival (such as civil and political rights). At the same time, as discussed in the next section, just because the right has a foundational quality for human wellbeing does not imply that it is clear or simple.

As well as variants of ‘natural law’, faith was commonly mentioned in relation to the origins of the right to food, specifically invoked in relation to Catholicism and Islam.⁶² In both Christian- and Muslim-majority communities, people spoke about the right to food as coming from the word of God and taking the form of, among other things, the responsibility of the rich to protect the poor in times of food crises.

Responsibilities for realizing rights to food

While understandings of the right to food derive from natural, religious, and constitutional law, responsibilities for enacting this right were widely seen to be private (in the sense of individualized and domestic, rather than in relation to markets) in the first instance. Other actors who bear responsibilities include extended families and kin groups first, then the wider local but still face-to-face community, followed by local yet more formal groups such as churches, mosques and NGOs, and finally the state. Although international NGOs were sometimes named as actors responsible for helping people secure rights to food, their responsibilities to act were seen to derive from the donor funds they receive. A similar point was made about national governments. Overall, the buck stopped with national governments. The allocation of responsibilities can be conceived as concentric circles, with primary responsibility vested in the household head, followed by the community and then official actors (local or national). A stylized depiction of the responsibilities for realizing rights to food is given in Figure 11, which suggests that, in popular thinking, relational proximity determines the allocation of responsibility to realize food rights. Although NGOs and donors were mentioned, it was in relation to domestic policies and programmes, and international organizations such as the United Nations were not discussed. From our findings, the global appears to intrude too little on the public imagination to matter in establishing the right to food.

Figure 11: A common mental map of responsibilities for securing food



Source: Transcripts from 2013 research round

The strong emphasis on personal responsibilities partly reflects a sense that people cannot depend on governments or others to feed them at all times, and that laziness and dependency are real possibilities should they do so. There were several places (Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, and Zambia in particular) in which lack of effort was seen as a major cause of hunger. This was associated with alcohol abuse and men abandoning their responsibilities. Yet the degree to which people expect to depend on themselves also makes sense within the contexts of i) the levels of political commitment or the mandates their states have to act on hunger, more specifically what people expect their governments to be willing and able to deliver, and ii) the conceptual and practical challenges of operationalizing a right to food. Where states were believed to have taken on, or been assigned, a mandate for action on hunger (Kenya, Bolivia), the emphasis on private responsibilities appeared less marked than where the state was not thought to have a role (e.g. Ethiopia, Pakistan). Similarly, where governments had established a full suite of actions to protect citizens against hunger (e.g. Bangladesh) there was less emphasis on private responsibilities and less blame for individuals than where the state was perceived as less active (e.g. Guatemala).

The emphasis on private responsibilities was commonly expressed in terms of the responsibilities of parents, most usually fathers, to provide for children. Adult children were also expected to provide for aged parents in several contexts, particularly in Asia. In Pakistan, there was a strong discourse about the responsibilities of men to provide for women, on the basis that women contributed their labour to household wellbeing through domestic work, child bearing, and unpaid care work. Elsewhere the model of a male breadwinner was also mentioned as the norm, yet women's dependence on men for their rights to food was not assumed to be so total. This highlights that women's rights, in Pakistan, are even more powerfully mediated by their domestic social relations than in other country contexts. The strong paternalist dimension to the responsibilities for provisioning was highlighted by the parallels drawn between fathers and states. In Bolivia, the government was said to be responsible for looking after citizens because it is 'like the father of all Bolivians'.⁶³ In Kenya, government failures to provide for the hungry echoed criticisms of men who failed to care for their families.⁶⁴

A distinction was drawn between a right to food in moments of crisis for which individuals are not to blame – natural disaster, harvest failure, death or disability – and more regular need for assistance. A surprisingly strong discourse of personal culpability and laziness as a cause of hunger was heard, particularly in Ethiopia and Zambia. It is interesting that this was the case in two countries with particularly long and sadly repeated histories of food crises, in which

structural factors (drought, climate change) could reasonably be said to ‘cause’ hunger. The findings suggest that official discourses may have, to some extent, been absorbed into public thinking about food security, in effect privatizing accountability for hunger.

This brief review of the research findings highlights both shared ideas and variations in meanings of ‘the right to food’ in different settings. Ideas range from a confused association with basic human needs, to a full-blown set of expectations based on legal claims on the state, and much in between. The preliminary comparative analysis suggests that how people understand their rights to food – indeed whether they have any understanding of such a notion at all – depends closely on particular features of the framework of accountability within which provisioning occurs. These include:

- mandates: what support people believe their state is obliged to provide;
- cultural and social organizational factors: these shape how responsibilities for provisioning are allocated between individuals, families, community groups, and larger entities (e.g. faith-based organizations);
- the state of food security: where chronic and acute hunger are more widespread, there seems to be more interest in the idea of a right to food;
- information flows and active civil society: some people have been told more about the right to food than others; NGOs and mass media appear to play a key role;
- actual provision: the nature and levels of support available seem to shape the imagination about what is possible.

The report now analyzes accountability in local food security programmes and schemes, based on a ground-level assessment by the people in these communities.

The patchwork of provision: state, private, formal, and informal help with food

The research looked at the kinds of support available in these communities. A key finding was that there are many programmes intended to protect and support provisioning within these communities. In those in which we have been working since 2009,⁶⁵ the numbers and scale of schemes and interventions have risen, and many direct transfer schemes are more generous than previously. It seems that many governments and donors have responded to the food and financial shocks of 2008–2010 with new permanent or temporary programmes, as well as a series of strategic policies around social protection and food security. Combined with pre-existing state, non-state, and customary or informal systems for supporting local provisioning, the overall impression in almost all of these communities is of a significant number of schemes, interventions, and support systems.

It seems clear that this patchwork of provision – not merely the formal state or NGO programmes but the full set of support – helps to explain why people whose wages have not adjusted, still manage to get by when prices are high. However, as is reasonably well-documented, informal social protection systems tend to work best when they are protecting against individual shocks. Longer-term erosions of purchasing power across wide swathes of communities are not easily protected against by family and community support systems. As the mental map of responsibilities for action on hunger in Figure 11 showed, the final resort, for those who can imagine such support, must be the state. So, from an accountability perspective, it is not enough that a range of types of support exist; people need to know about them and to be reasonably assured that they can access them if and when needed. They need to be triggered by, and responsive to, information about people’s food needs. They must meet acceptable standards for what support they deliver and how, and attract sanctions if they fail to protect people when they need it most. The next section looks at whether these conditions hold.

State support

State support for provision in the communities studied comprised subsidized food schemes, cash-transfer programmes specifically targeted at protecting consumption of poor or vulnerable groups, public food grain reserves or stocks which are designed both to stabilize prices and resource transfers and subsidy schemes, and support for agricultural inputs (mostly relevant to rural areas). Table 4 summarizes the wide range of programmes that research participants in these communities knew of and from which they sometimes benefited.

Table 4: Formal state support for provisioning reaching research sites

	Subsidized food scheme	Cash transfer	Food/Grain reserves	Agricultural inputs support	Public work schemes
Yes	<p>BGD (Open Market Sale (OMSS))</p> <p>BOL (Enterprise to Support Food Production (EMAPA))</p> <p>ETH (via consumers' associations)</p> <p>IDN (Rice for Poor Households (RASKIN))</p> <p>PAK (Utility stores)</p> <p>VNM (Price stabilization program, in Hanoi)</p>	<p>BGD (Vulnerable Group Development (VGD))</p> <p>BOL (Bono Juancito Pinto, Renta Dignidad, Bono Juana Azurduy)</p> <p>GTM (Bono Seguro)</p> <p>IDN (Temporary Direct Cash Transfer (BLSM), Hopeful Family Program (PKH) (conditional))</p> <p>KEN (Cash for the Old)</p> <p>PAK (Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and Watan Card)</p> <p>VNM (transfer in cash for the poor and near poor households, the old, the disabled, health care services for children under 6, conditional and unconditional cash transfers)</p>	<p>BGD (stocks for VGD, Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) and disaster relief)</p> <p>IDN (Bulog, Food Logistics Agency)</p> <p>VNM (General Department of State Reserves under Ministry of Finance)</p> <p>ZMB (Food reserves Agency)</p>	<p>STRONG SUPPORT</p> <p>BFA (Agricultural Production and Food Security Improvement Project (PAPSA))</p> <p>IDN (Community Food Distribution Institute (LPDM), Acceleration of Food Consumption Diversification (P2KP), Sustainable Food Houses Areas (KRPL), Integrated Crop Management Field Schools (SLPTT), Development of Rural Agribusiness Enterprises (PUAP))</p> <p>VNM (insurance and relief policy against disaster, in Nghe An)</p> <p>WEAK SUPPORT</p> <p>BGD (subsidized fertilizer, seeds)</p> <p>ETH (Oromia Saving and Credit Association)</p> <p>GTM (Fertilizers Delivery)</p>	<p>BGD (40 days work program in Khulna and Employment generation for Hardcore Poor (EGHP))</p> <p>ETO (Productive Safety Net Program)</p>

				KEN (Arid and Semi-Arid Lands Programme, Kenya Rural Development) <i>ZMB (but fertilizer subsidy just been cut)</i>	
No	BFA GTM KEN ZMB	BFA ETH ZMB	BFA BOL ETH GTM KEN PAK	BOL PAK	BFA GTM IDN KEN PAK VNM

Source: Transcripts from 2013 research round

Formal non-state support

Faith-based organizations stood out in almost all sites as a crucial source of food assistance. In Chikwanda in northern Zambia, people relied almost exclusively on them. In Mukuru in Nairobi, Kenya, churches and mosques gave away food (maize flour, sugar, salt, and cooking oil) on a weekly and sometimes bi-weekly basis. Respondents said they were the best source of support. In Lango Baya in coastal Kenya, the urban community of Kaya, Burkina Faso, and in the communities in Bolivia and Guatemala, local churches were mentioned as vital sources of support. In Cianjur, in Java, Indonesia, people mentioned *zakat* or the Islamic tax on wealth as a source of help.⁶⁶

Across the sites, international and national NGOs provided a wide array of types of assistance that people cited as helping them with provisioning. Some employment schemes and food- or cash-for-work schemes were in place in the Khulna and Dhaka sites in Bangladesh (DSK, CARE, Shushilon, BRAC, Gonomukhi and Solidarity), in Kaya in urban Burkina Faso (APEPJ) and Lango Baya in coastal Kenya (Red Cross). Most of these schemes provided training as well as income-generating support.

In addition to their role in providing first-hand support, NGOs were also raising awareness around the issue of rights. For instance in Dhaka, some respondents knew of the right to food through the work of DSK, an NGO which was working on awareness of rights to vote, education, food, work, and healthcare. The right to housing was another key right mentioned by respondents in urban Dhaka, which can be attributed to some extent to the campaigning of anti-eviction NGOs such as BLAST. Awareness of rights in Kenya were similarly high following information campaigns preceding the vote on the new constitution in 2010.

Local forms of charity and solidarity

In addition to formal activities such as those listed above, a range of informal activities and support systems were in place to protect people against the individual misfortunes that threaten food security. All societies and community groups have such systems, which appear to provide the basis for social cohesion in food insecure settings. Yet the impression that these were undermined and cut back when food costs rose was repeated this year (see *Squeezed* for a more detailed discussion).

In the predominantly Muslim sites in Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Pakistan, respondents referred to the importance of charity as a source of food and/or cash. There were many stories of bonuses distributed by employers, medical treatment paid for by a headmistress, companies

supporting individuals and families and an MP distributing sarees and lungis (traditional clothing in Bangladesh), particularly around holidays. In Khulna it was reported that households received 10kg of rice for Eid-ul Fitr in charity. Similarly in Indonesia, one respondent in Bekasi, near Jakarta, referred to the 'rain of donation' that occurs around Eid. These acts of religious charity extend beyond holidays. For example, in Pélérék, Indonesia, there is a donation of rice or money during participation in Quran reciting gatherings or other religious functions. Some of the poorest families receive *zakat* in the form of rice, and the distribution of collected donations is managed by the mosque. In Dadu, in rural Sindh, Pakistan, during the month of Ramadan local elites distribute rice, pulses, salt, and ghee while a local factory gave out clothing and cash stipends to its employees. In Karachi some landlords explained that they charged their poorest tenants only half the rent due, as a form of religious charity, while other rich individuals explained that they distributed religious charity to 'poor deserving families'.

Rich individuals also played an important role in other countries. In Kaya, Burkina Faso, a local rich family had been buying bags of millet for some poor families. There were similar stories of 'willing rich people' in Kenya and Zambia. Respondents also mentioned small acts of support from the family or the wider community. In Chikwanda in rural northern Zambia, an official explained that 'traditionally, the extended family is at the centre of providing food to the relatives who are food insecure. Over time because of poverty, the reliance on this type of assistance has been deteriorating but at one point it used to be the most dependable'. This view echoes the findings recorded in last year's report, *Squeezed*, which showed that customary sources of support were being commodified with price rises.

In Guatemala and Bolivia, the family provided the most important source of informal support. In urban Kami and rural Pirhuas in the Cochabamba region in Bolivia, several respondents mentioned assistance in kind, such as receiving eggs regularly from a sister-in-law, children bringing fruit on visits to parents, or a brother sending potatoes and wheat to his family. In Indonesia, Kenya, and Zambia, some parents relied on assistance from their children. In several sites, people also mentioned support from those who have migrated. In Burkina Faso for instance, migrants living in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana sent money back to their families, and sometimes to the priest who then gave it to a member of the church.

Beyond the family unit, several respondents explained that solidarity among members of a given community was key. In Karachi, Pakistan, respondents described sharing with neighbours the vegetables they brought back from their village and that children would often eat at neighbours' houses on days when there was not enough food in their own households. In Kaya, Burkina Faso, one respondent stated that 'when your neighbour's hut burns you should help him to extinguish it if not fire is likely to take holds yours'. This was echoed by a group of farmers in Lango Baya in Kenya who explained that 'If a neighbour needs mchicha (traditional vegetables) to eat with ugali I will give her. If I have them in my farm and she doesn't, I will give her. Who knows, perhaps next time I will be the one seeking the same help from her'.

In Chikwanda, Zambia, women in particular played a key mobilization role in times of crisis. As one teacher explained, 'When there is a serious need in the community, women tend to quickly group together and tackle the impending problem. They mobilize cash or food or clothes or their labour, to help those in need'. In urban Kami, Bolivia, professional groups support each other. For instance the Piñami Merchants Association would lend money or material assistance to any of its members if necessary. Similarly, when someone working in embroidery faced a difficult economic situation, others would collaborate and organize a fundraiser or make a personal contribution. In several sites, those who had enough land to generate a surplus in the past year had exchanged labour for food for their neighbours in need.

Other types of informal support on which respondents relied were credit and savings groups. While some in Karachi took loans from their employers to be deducted from their wages, others borrowed money from shopkeepers or bought on credit. Often, people bought agricultural inputs on credit with a promise of paying an extra amount at the time of repayment. In Oromia in Ethiopia, the tradition of interest-free loans of money and crops was in decline. Respondents

there explained that wealthy people would loan crops with the condition that the value will be returned with interest after the next harvest. In Mukuru, Kenya, one woman was quoted saying 'It is really tough to loan anyone anything for now because they are mostly likely not to return, so you treat it as a present.' Saving groups seemed to be particularly important in Bolivia and Ethiopia, including rotating funds from Mothers' Clubs in Bolivia, and *iddirs* (funeral saving groups) and *equibs* (general savings clubs) in Ethiopia.

There were several informal labour-sharing schemes across many of the sites. In Kolfe, Ethiopia, some religious groups, *Tsebel*s, would meet every month and help each other during bad times, including by sharing labour work. A similar pattern was found in Oromia, where customary labour exchange arrangements (*debos* and *wonfels*) were said to persist. In *debos*, one household would call on others to help with work on the land in exchange for meals during the workday. *Wonfels* differ in that households collaborate to take agricultural activities in turn, thus adding an element of reciprocity. Both customary arrangements were again reported to be in decline, being replaced by modern kinds of labour sharing, often using cash payments. More and more the people of the kebele are organized into *gares* (20–35 households) and 1–5 structures (5 households). The government urged the 1–5 structures and *gare* members to help each other in farming activities. Other forms of agricultural labour sharing were reported in Java (Indonesia), Kenya, and Bangladesh.

However, across a majority of sites, respondents pointed to a steady overall decline in informal sources of support, which they explained was due to increasing costs of living. This represents the continuation of a trend previously observed in *Squeezed*. In general, there was a sense that people would assist each other if they could, but as was explained by a respondent in Karachi, Pakistan, 'Instead of helping others, neighbours ask for help themselves now'. In a focus group with women in Dhaka one participant exclaimed 'Who will help whom in here? Everybody is in the same condition'. In Karachi, another focus group with women revealed that many stopped their husbands from helping relatives, as everyone was living hand-to-mouth.

Standards, monitoring and sanctions in food security programmes

So the patchwork of provision helps people get by, but does it mean people feel protected against food insecurity? That question is difficult to answer, but vital. In some locations, people indicate they have access to support should they need it, although such help comes at a price (shame from asking relatives for help, queuing time, low status from eating bad food). But in many others, people face the possibility of hunger without much assurance that they can get the help they need. They may be the wrong religion or social profile to benefit from community support; the process of accessing programmes may be too mysterious, complex or costly to be relied upon; short-term schemes may run out of funding when needed most; they may not be sufficiently close to the Chief or Chairman to be selected to benefit. (It is rare to hear that need is the primary basis on which beneficiaries are selected, despite what the designers and evaluators of social protection schemes appear to believe.)

How is it possible for there to be numerous programmes and support systems on the ground and yet people still feel unprotected? We think that the answer lies in the degree to which people can depend on these systems to protect them, which in turn depends on the strength of the mechanisms of accountability that govern food security provision.

So what do we know about accountability in food security programmes? Our framework points us to four elements that need to be in position for public services to be accountable:

- a mandate or remit for action;
- standards for such action;

- a system for monitoring;
- sanctions or enforceability.

The research shows that most of the societies featured in this study appear to have a working notion of a right to food. However, this is often seen as a personal, family and community mandate rather than a state one. While there is no expectation (or hope) that governments will accept full responsibility to protect people against food insecurity, there is clearly a larger role for states amid increasingly global drivers of food insecurity. We also see that where states had clearly accepted such a responsibility in principle, and had demonstrated capacities to act in practice, people were more likely to view their rights as at least potentially enforceable with respect to the state.

Box 8 shows how people in these communities saw the standards of food security support programmes, monitoring systems, and sanctions for failures to protect them against hunger or food insecurity.

Box 8: Problems with public food security programmes

'That relief food comes rarely and when it does it is too little that is why people injure one another.'

Mr M., 40, artisan, participant in FGD with men, Mukuru, Kenya

'When I received my rent I went to EMAPA (Support Company for Food production) believing I could find sugar in lower price, but it was at the same price of the market (cancha). I even got less weight, resulting deceived.'

Mrs C., 65, retired miner and widow with four dependents, Kami, Bolivia

'Nobody takes the allotment of RASKIN here. The rice is very poor in quality, Ma'am. It does not taste good at all. But for those who really are underprivileged, they would have to eat that rice rather than not eating all.'

Female participant in FGD with women, Bekasi, Indonesia

'It is really tough because people are so many, and there is a lot of pushing in the queues made. So one might receive the food but you may go home with a broken leg/arm. It is for the strong not the sick and elderly.'

Mr. N, 39, manual labourer, participant in FGD with men, Mukuru, Kenya

Standards

When it comes to standards for food security programming, it is important to recognize that people may not be aware when public policies are working well, because food supply will be regular, prices will be stable, and quality will be assured. However, people do have particularly strong views on the standards for direct food transfers and food and agricultural subsidy schemes within food security programming. It is clear that standards are systematically lower than people's reasonable expectations. These include standards of equity and transparency in beneficiary selection and delivery procedures, the quality of goods transferred or subsidized, the impacts on the community more widely, and scope for beneficiary feedback or grievance mechanisms. These were common complaints in the communities studied, yet they also echo the literature on popular grievances with social protection schemes more widely. This indicates that low standards are hard-wired into food security programming. The programmes fail to meet expected standards in these communities because of:

- tight targeting, which creates the scope for frontline discretion and rationing and allows local political economic interests in the process of beneficiary selection;

- a focus on individual households: this means programme design often fails to recognize that people are part of wider communities⁶⁷ which often provide (more) important sources of support than the state or NGO schemes which trigger jealousy and social division;
- the lack of safe and effective grievance, complaint or feedback mechanisms;
- a general lack of transparency about what is being distributed, when, and by whom; who is entitled and why; how to claim entitlements and how to complain safely should problems arise.

Monitoring

From the reports of community members and key informants, awareness of central government efforts to monitor food security was limited mainly to monitoring the prices of staple foods. In Kaya, Burkina Faso, the President of the League of Consumers is charged with collecting data on prices, quantities, and quality of foodstuffs in order to inform actions to prevent inflation. In Dhaka, Bangladesh, people spoke about how the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) has the remit under the Food and Commerce Ministry to monitor commodity prices. Inspectors there are tasked with checking marketplaces to see whether traders are selling rice at a fair price. When the price of rice increases, people know that actions are taken to sell rice on the open market at a reduced price.

Indonesia appeared to be alone in possessing a full official system for monitoring food security and nutrition (the Food and Nutrition Surveillance System (SKPG)) which accessed data on provisioning, or household and individual outcomes. In Bekasi, officials reported that a sophisticated monitoring system for malnutrition and under-nourishment was in place, with village midwives on the frontline gathering data. At the time of the research, the Office of Health Affairs was developing a new recording and reporting system, to replace an old database. The new system is to be made accessible online and to the public. In Cianjur, in Java, field investigations of 840 households in sub-districts were being used to monitor food supply, access and utilization (nutrition). This was led by the Food Security Affairs unit along with the local agricultural, industrial, trade, and health agencies. The data will be compiled in the Food and Nutrition Awareness System and used by the regional government to monitor the food and nutrition situation of local communities.

More piecemeal and unofficial systems for monitoring local food security were present in other communities. In the absence of more systematic data collection, officials and NGOs often rely on key informants to identify those most in need. For example, in Lango Baya in coastal Kenya, village elders identify the people most in need. They tell the chief who then passes the information on to the District Officer. In a number of communities, particularly those in Bangladesh, Guatemala, and Kenya, this highly discretionary and subjective approach to food security was said to lead to corruption, and was at the least likely to benefit the most vocal over the most hungry people.

While not everyone may know how their government monitors food security, people on the frontline of hunger have a strong stake in doing so, thus their lack of knowledge is a significant gap. Yet it is equally significant that even educated key informants, such as local government officials or elected or civil society representatives, were typically unable to identify systems for monitoring food security at the local level. In many instances, this reflects the fact that there is little monitoring capacity at the local level because data systems do not reach far enough to capture data about provisioning. Instead they measure agricultural yields and market prices in urban centres, at a relatively high level of aggregation. It also highlights that even where sophisticated monitoring systems exist, they frequently fail to close the feedback loop and build local capacities to feed information into the system.

Given that monitoring systems as sophisticated and close to the ground as those in Indonesia are not common, local means of identifying and monitoring hunger are more urgent. The availability of more objective yet locally relevant criteria could remove or reduce the degree of

illegitimate discretion with which local officials or local elites select beneficiaries. This would help make local food security systems more accountable. The need for closer attention to how hunger and food needs are monitored at the local level appears, from this research, to be a key gap in the accountability mechanisms that should connect people at risk of hunger to the political and administrative processes that ought to trigger programmatic responses.

Sanctions/enforcement

The researchers frequently faced incredulity when asking if there were any sanctions for officials who failed in their duty to protect local people from hunger or food insecurity. In general, a number of sanctions were identified to force recalcitrant parents to provide for their children, ranging from social pressures to the law. But the idea that local officials or elites could be held to account for their failures to act was so far from reality in most (but not all) cases that some people found the idea of monitoring and sanctions difficult to understand, or dismissed it out of hand. In several cases, people asserted that if such sanctions existed, there would be no hunger and no corruption in food programmes.

Apart from the widespread sense that officials and elites are generally unaccountable to local people, there were specific challenges in taking action. One was a lack of channels through which to report officials. This was usually discussed in relation to perceptions of corruption in the distribution of relief. In Dhaka, Bangladesh, as well as in Dadu, Pakistan, respondents said that they did not know who should complain, where, or to whom. In Lango Baya, Kenya, respondents similarly explained there were no channels through which to report failures by the chief (who is mandated to distribute relief under the 2010 constitution). In Bolivia, by contrast, some people thought there were parent and school board committees that monitored the school breakfast programme, so that at the municipality level, there was 'a type of control'.

It was not only the lack of sanctions in government programmes that concerned people. In Kenya people were similarly concerned about the lack of channels for reporting problems with the work of NGOs. A group of farmers explained that 'When someone comes and gives you help, you cannot start asking them questions about their work. Who would you report to? We hear that their headquarters are far in Nairobi'. In Bolivia, people spoke about their concerns about the monitoring of Church programmes.

Even where channels for complaint were known, inequality of power effectively deterred many people from complaining about the behaviour of local officials. In Mukuru in Nairobi, one young man said: 'there is nowhere to report the chief. We know that he and the village elders steal the relief food and sell it or take it to their homes, but there are no reporting channels. If you report them, they would know and make you no benefit from relief food the time it comes again'. A young woman in rural Nesemtenga in Burkina Faso said, 'if the elephant of the king destroys peasants' harvests, who can report it to the king?' In Guatemala, the sensitivities of a post-conflict society were reflected in people's concerns that complaints about an official would be tinged with political affiliation.

Once again, it is important to note that people do not necessarily know the systems in place for enforcing sanctions against officials. For instance, a local community leader in Mukuru in Nairobi explained that there were a number of checks and balances in place to make sure relief food reached designated areas. These include taking photographs, labelling bags with 'food not for sale', monitoring by local elders, and so on. However, she also noted that while chiefs can in theory be sacked for failures to follow the rules, she did not know of any of who had faced sanctions to date – despite popular complaints about their performance in the area.

In the language of accountability analysis, efforts to hold officials to account via the 'short route' (see Figure 4) for direct food transfers were difficult. Other means and types of action for food security programming to be held to account were more difficult to conceptualize, but similar analyses could be applied to, for instance, the responsiveness of agricultural extension services, input subsidy, and distribution programmes on the frontline.

Interestingly, however, many people had relatively strong faith in the 'long route' as the means for sanctioning failures on food security. People spoke clearly and confidently of the electoral consequences they could cause for local representatives who were deemed to have failed on food security. Respondents in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Pakistan and Zambia all signalled that the action – or inaction – of local politicians on the issue of hunger would affect votes. People spoke about not re-electing a particular MP, or that they would try to persuade others not to vote for a person in power who had 'ignored the hungry'. These are issues worth exploring more closely for those who are interested in increasing accountability for hunger.

5 IMPLICATIONS: ACCOUNTABILITY ON THE FRONTLINES OF FOOD SECURITY

This year's research uncovered new insights into food rights and responsibilities on the ground. *Help Yourself!* is intended to kick-start thinking about how to design food policies and programmes to put accountability at their centre, to ensure they strengthen, rather than undermine, the right to food and responsibilities for food security.

The following are some insights from the 23 researched communities:

- Societies share understandings of the rights to, and responsibilities for, protection against hunger. However, these are largely derived from natural rights, moral and religious principles, and social rights. The idea of a universal legal human right with enforceable claims is rare, existing only where governments have an explicit mandate to tackle hunger – and then not always.
- A wide array of policies, programmes, schemes, and customs, international, national, and local, is in place in most communities, which affords some protection against hunger. In those communities visited since 2009, there is visibly more support now than five years ago, at the height of the food and financial crisis. This suggests that governments, faith-based organizations, donors, and NGOs are alert to the fact that the forces of food insecurity are increasingly out of the hands of individuals. People need assistance – and continue to do so.
- Despite its scale and plural nature, this patchwork of provision does not amount to an accountable system for protecting against hunger or food insecurity. There are major obstacles to people realizing their rights. Customary systems are patchy and uneven at the best of times, and are themselves weakened by rapid changes in food prices and responses to them. Public action has scaled up, and there are policies and schemes that people feel work for them, but many are criticized as discriminatory, discretionary, demeaning, unreliable, and divisive.

These findings leave a strong impression that many people feel that they are ultimately on their own when it comes to food security. The picture is different where people know their government is officially, legally, or practically responsible for helping them, if only in critical times. In those contexts people do have expectations of their state, and appear willing to hold it to account with the limited means at their disposal (mostly votes). States were seen to have duties and obligations to act on hunger and food security where a clear legal or policy mandate for the state has been established through activism and popular mobilization (Kenya, Bolivia). Some governments are already acting in ways that visibly help protect people against hunger and food security when they need it, and which people value (Bangladesh). Some people had heard a great deal about their rights to food from civil society including NGOs, church pulpits, radio shows (e.g. Zambia, Bolivia).

The good news is that while people may not have a strong sense of their rights or official responsibilities on food, there are many schemes, programmes, policies and private actions, and informal systems that together provide a patchwork of protection. The bad news is that the coverage is just that – patchy, threadbare, stitched together from various older schemes, and not always effective at keeping hunger at bay. With a few exceptions, the overall pattern found in these low- and middle-income countries was one of a great number of activities which still fail to help people feel safe and protected against food insecurity. Fragmentary provision like this

helps to explain why and how people get by when prices are high and wages stubbornly stuck. But it also means that people never feel secure against hunger.

Our findings strongly suggest that it is the weakness – often absence – of mechanisms of accountability in frontline policies and programmes for food security that explain the lack of a sense of security against hunger. It is also the reason people complain and worry about food price rises despite the multiple schemes in place and the rising wages for so many. The problem is that the regulation of food markets, food and cash transfer schemes intended to protect against hunger, and support to agricultural production, processing and marketing – the machinery of public food security policies and programmes – is unaccountable to people who live at risk of hunger.

From analysis of people's criticisms of food security policies and programmes, and from what is known of accountability in the delivery of other public services, a mandate for action is not enough, there must be a monitoring mechanism. The public needs to set standards for the official response, and there must be sanctions for failures to act. What we hear is that systems for monitoring hunger and food insecurity rarely capture local realities, and few people know about how they work.

The most striking weakness and arguably the most easily actionable is in the low standards of hunger and food security programmes. Whether judged against human rights principles,⁶⁸ targeting efficiency, or protection function standards, these are typically demeaning, divisive, unreliable, discriminatory, and discretionary in their effects. Research participants identified the following specific problems, common to most programmes:

- tight targeting, which creates the scope for frontline discretion and rationing and creates local political economic interests in the process of beneficiary selection;
- a focus on individual households: this means programme design often fails to recognize that people are part of wider communities⁶⁹ which in most cases provide (more) important sources of support than the state or NGO schemes that trigger jealousy and social division;
- the lack of safe and effective grievance, complaint or feedback mechanisms;
- general lack of transparency about what is being distributed, when and by whom; who is entitled and why; how to claim entitlements and how to complain safely should problems be perceived to arise;
- and finally, there is very little in the way of enforceability or sanctions: there is little perceived scope for action against officials who fail to do their duty. The long electoral route to accountability is the means that was most often, somewhat forlornly, offered as an answer.

These findings suggest a number of recommendations. They draw on two areas of established guidance, on how to implement human rights approaches to social and economic rights⁷⁰ and on how to strengthen accountability in public service delivery.⁷¹ As the findings indicate that the unaccountability of local food security reflects weaknesses across the relationships between citizens, policy makers, and frontline providers, it is necessary to suggest actions to address all three.

Recommendations for governments in food insecure countries

Governments in food insecure countries can act by putting accountability at the heart of their food policies. This means ensuring the mandate for acting on food security is set by people at risk of hunger, through mobilization and real participation in food policy spaces, as the outgoing Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food has argued. For many governments with large populations at risk of hunger, there are good political economy incentives for taking on the right to food as part of their mandate. Short-term political considerations aside, food crises, such as the 2008 price spike, can cause political and social instability that triggers regime change. This

research confirms that the legitimacy of governments depends, to a significant degree, on their success in protecting people against acute episodes of hunger, including rapid price rises.

However, as the Kenya case shows, it is not enough for the state to declare the Right to Food or for civil society and the media to communicate this fact, if this does not then result in better standards and procedures for the delivery of food security policies and programmes. Kenyan people complain that their new constitution declares they have such a right, yet when they go to claim relief food from the local chief, he has none to give, or limits it to his political supporters or kin. Systems for accountability are also needed for food security policies and programmes. This means clarifying what constitutes an unacceptable level of hunger or malnutrition in the society; what types, forms, and amounts of food or other transfers are to be provided; how those are to be sourced and delivered; how food insecure or hungry people are to be identified and served. Programmes that discriminate, divide, and demean people should be re-designed, and targeting mechanisms need to be reconsidered. Delivery systems should also put a higher priority on reducing discretion and unpredictability, particularly in relation to agricultural input support programmes.

Improved standard-setting also implies better monitoring systems. From what people say, these can do more to track how well people are eating, instead of prices and production levels (as in the new policy in Indonesia). Monitoring can also be more sensitive to contextual differences in the form and experience of hunger, for instance, by recognizing the impacts of seasonality, remoteness, occupation, and climate on food security. Qualitative indicators of food security can help to capture local differences in hunger and food insecurity, as are used in some famine early warning systems. Crucially, monitoring systems will only strengthen accountability if they close the feedback loop and build local monitoring capacities. This does not imply large, technically sophisticated systems so much as systems geared towards feeding information into a system that is geared towards using it to make policies that respond to need.

Governments should recognize their interests in being more responsive on food security by enforcing action against officials who fail in their duty. Corruption in food-transfer programmes remains a concern, but unresponsive local officials and the blindness of central governments are equally problematic. As many research participants noted, the mass media can play a significant role in raising the costs of failure by governments to take action against hunger. As more states adopt Right to Food legislation, legal action is also increasingly an option.

Recommendations for civil society

For human rights defenders, social movements, and progressive NGOs: there is scope to convene local- and national-level dialogues about the right to food, to stimulate political debates domestically. There is also a large space for human rights education nationally and locally to discuss what a right to food might mean in a given context, in both theory and practice. In Zambia and Bangladesh, respondents spoke of how they knew of the right to food through the work of NGOs. People also turn to their churches, mosques, and other faith organizations for help. It is worth exploring the role of faith-based institutions in widening understanding of the right to food, and in providing the institutional bases through which it might be realized.

Information about rights without action to realize them can, however, lead to frustration with 'rights talk', as has been seen in Kenya. Dialogue and communications need to take place within active social movements and coalitions working on social and economic rights issues, not as stand-alone interventions.

Recommendations for the media

With relation to the right to food, the media plays two crucial roles. First, it can be used to tell people about their human rights, e.g. an effective radio campaign in Zambia and similar campaigns in Bolivia, Vietnam, Guatemala, and Kenya. However, communicating ideas about

rights without the prospect of action to secure them is likely to lead to frustration rather than empowerment. Second, the media has the power to shed light on food security failures. In Pakistan in particular, the role of the media was vividly imagined as holding the government to account for its failures to tackle food price rises. The scope for naming-and-shaming through media exposé may be among the few actions or sanctions available to citizens. These can make failures visible and increase their costs for governments, creating incentives to act. As stories of hunger and official failure tend to be newsworthy, journalists are often key allies in popular campaigns for public accountability.

Recommendations for donors

Donors and NGOs both need to reflect on their own accountability in relation to food security, including thinking about what kinds of stand-alone initiatives they finance and support. Technical solutions are more prominent in food and nutrition security programming, but these push out considerations of accountability. Flag-waving branded food security programmes may intend to strengthen accountability to the citizens and donors of rich countries by showing results and raising visibility. But do they strengthen accountability to those at risk of hunger? Or send confusing messages about rights and responsibilities? Do donor and NGO programmes undermine or support customary institutions of food security? To what extent do the principles of accountability embedded in humanitarian programmes shape food security policy and programming design?

ANNEX: COUNTRY FACT SHEETS

Bangladesh

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	108.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$137 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	1.2% of GDP	2009
	8.9% of total expenditure	2009

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	43.3%	2010
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	31.5%	2010
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$840	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.52	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	27.7% of poorest quintile	2010

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	16.3%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	68.0%	2005
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	49.9% of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	118 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	36.1 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

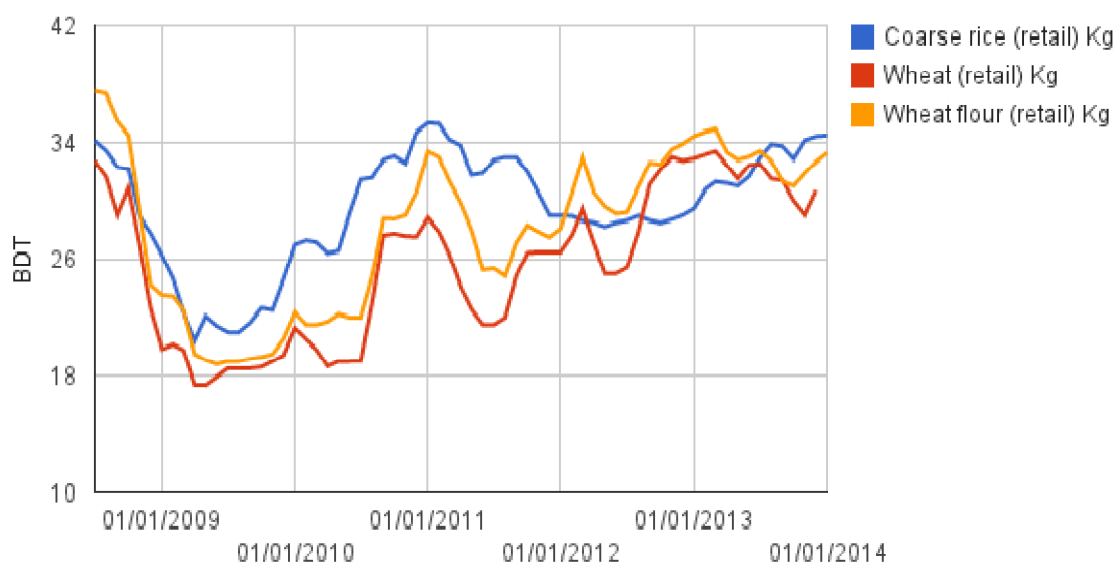
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	41.3%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	15.6%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	36.4%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	-0.8%	2005
Cereal import dependency ratio	8.4%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	7.6%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	11.0%	Year to Aug. 13
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	8.5%	Year to Jul. 13

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: Dhaka



Bolivia

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	104.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$306 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	0.3% of GDP	2007
	1.4% of total expenditure	2007

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	15.6%	2008
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	51.3%	2009
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$2,220	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.68	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	10.3% of poorest quintile	2007

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	21.3%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	54.3%	2003
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	27.8% of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	140 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	46.9 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

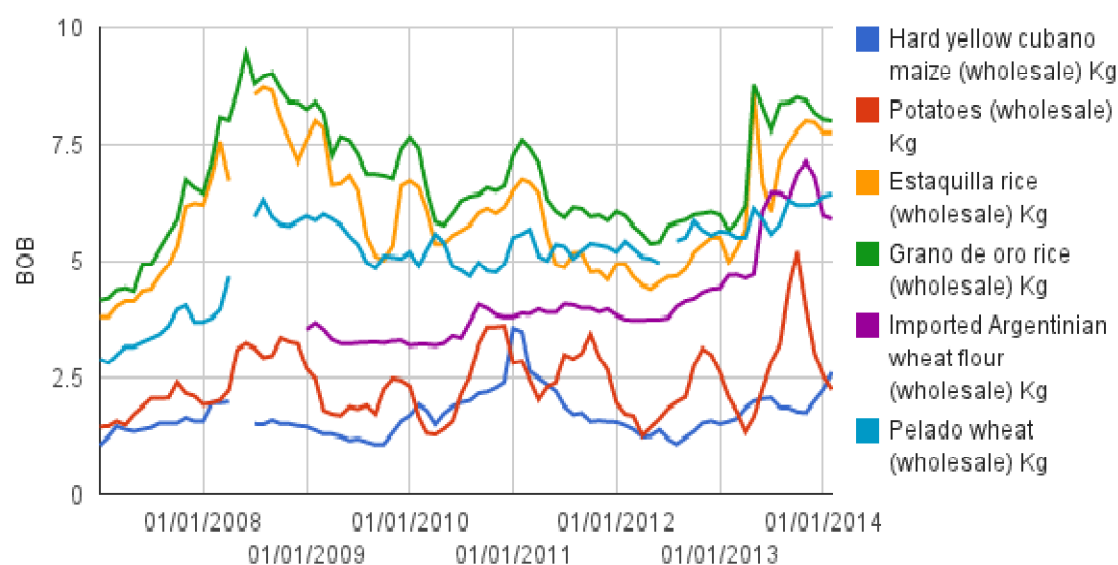
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	27.1%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	1.4%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	4.3%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	-0.7%	2005
Cereal import dependency ratio	24.2%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	4.8%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	6.1%	Year to Aug. 13
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	9.4%	Year to Aug. 13

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: Cochabamba



Burkina Faso

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	119.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$122 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	2.7% of GDP	2010
	10.8% of total expenditure	2010

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	44.6%	2009
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	46.7%	2009
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$670	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.34	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	#N/A of poorest quintile	#N/A

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	25.0%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	60.3%	2003
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	42.0% of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	178 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	30.3 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

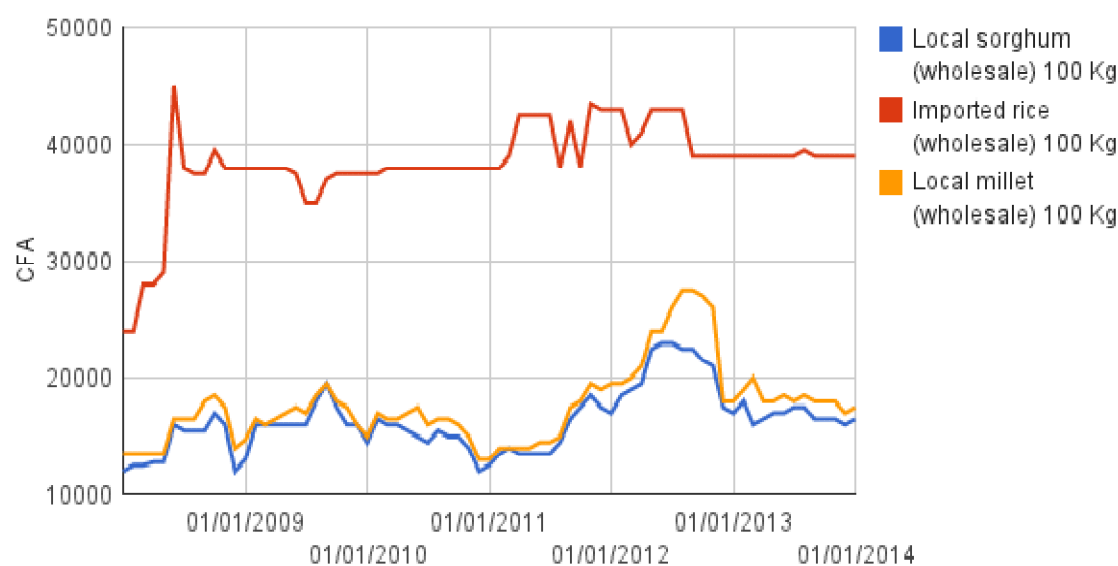
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	32.9%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	10.9%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	24.4%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	-0.8%	2005
Cereal import dependency ratio	8.4%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	2.0%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	-1.3%	Year to Nov. 13
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	-5.1%	Year to Sep. 13

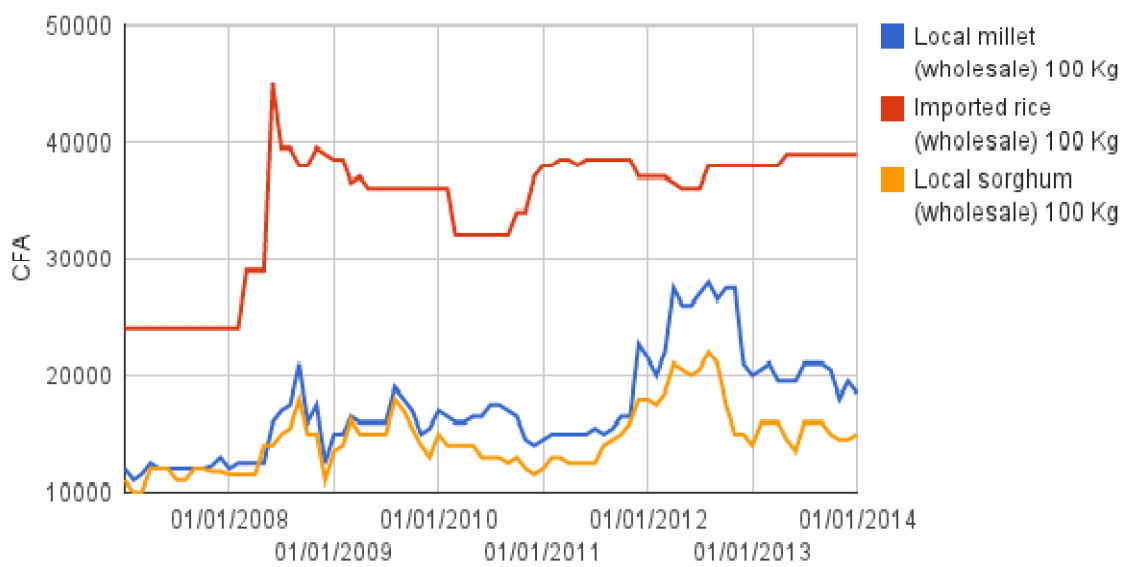
(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: Kongoussi



Source: FAO GIEWS

Food prices: Ouagadougou



Source: FAO GIEWS

Ethiopia

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	101.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$109 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	3.1% of GDP	2009
	17.5% of total expenditure	2009

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	30.7%	2011
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	29.6%	2011
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$380	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.40	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	#N/A of poorest quintile	#N/A

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	37.1%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	56.9%	2004
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	54.5% of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	314 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	31.8 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

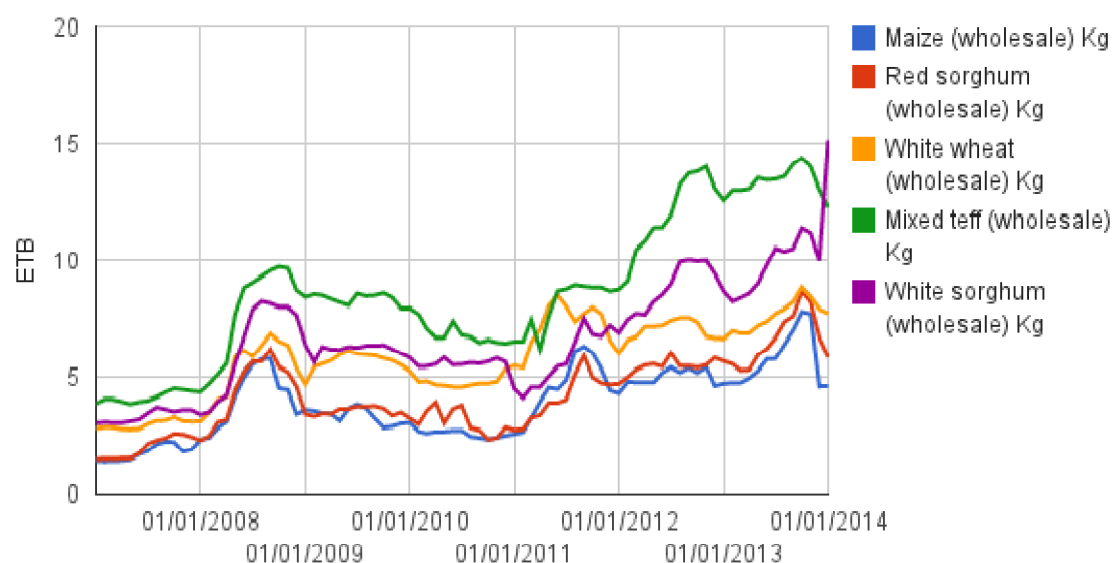
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	44.4%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	9.7%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	28.7%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

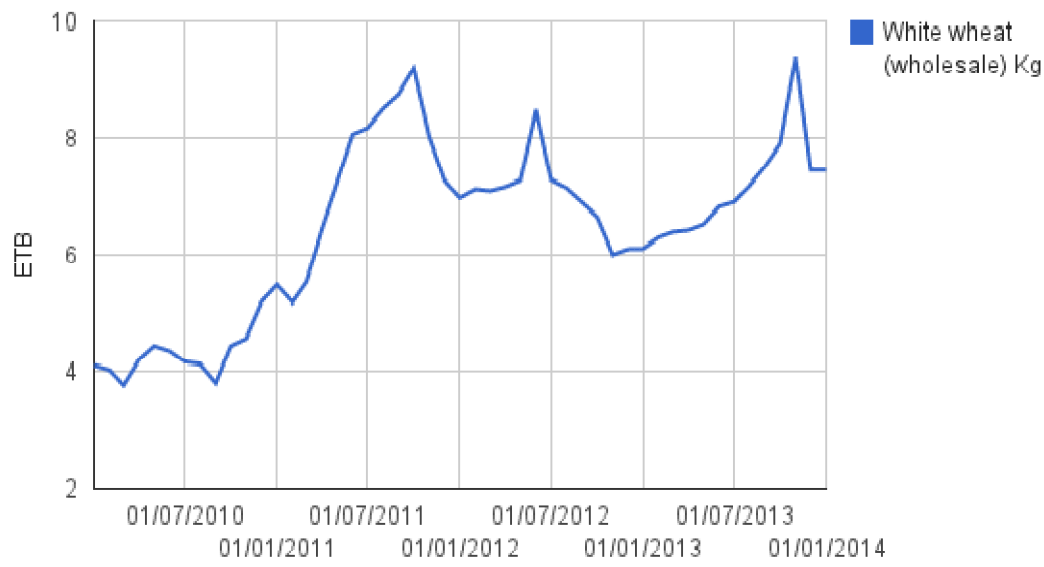
Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	-0.8%	2005
Cereal import dependency ratio	10.1%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	7.2%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	8.2%	Year to Aug. 13
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	7.9%	Year to Aug. 13

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: Addis Ababa



Food prices: Shashemene



Source: FAO GIEWS

Guatemala

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	107.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$258 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	0.3% of GDP	2011
	2.0% of total expenditure	2011

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	13.5%	2006
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	53.7%	2011
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$3,120	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.58	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	53.9% of poorest quintile	2006

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	30.5%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	52.6%	2006
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	#DIV/0! of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	201 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	45.8 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

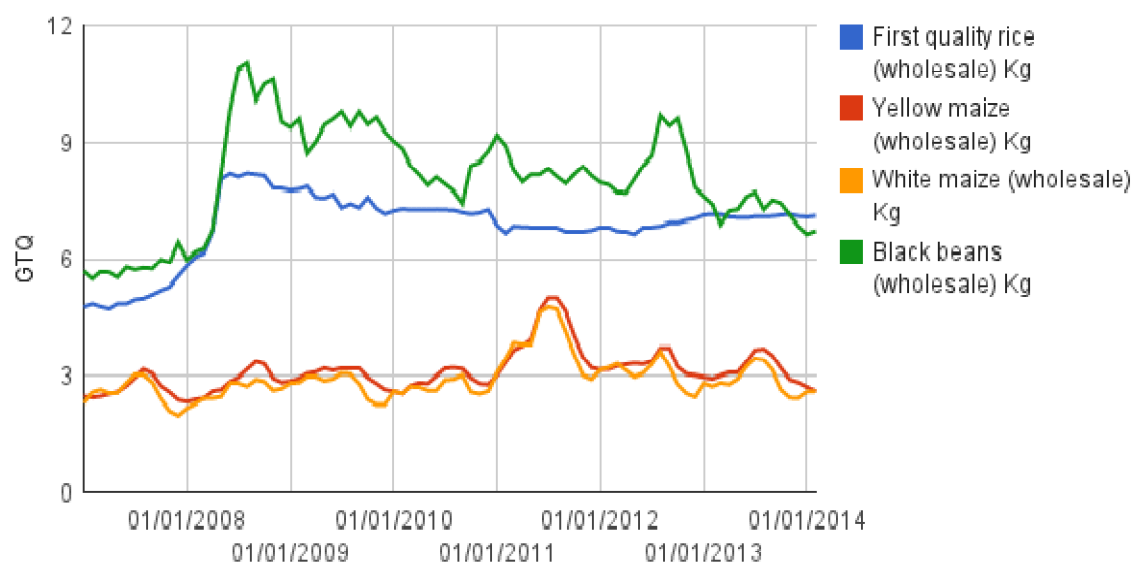
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	48.0%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	1.4%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	13.1%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	#N/A	#N/A
Cereal import dependency ratio	49.2%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	4.5%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	4.4%	Year to Aug. 13
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	8.4%	Year to Aug. 13

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: Guatemala City



Indonesia

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	123.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$222 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	0.5% of GDP	2007
	2.6% of total expenditure	2007

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	16.2%	2011
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	12.0%	2012
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$3,420	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.63	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	69.0% of poorest quintile	2009

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	9.1%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	21.7%	2008
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	41.6% of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	64 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	46.2 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

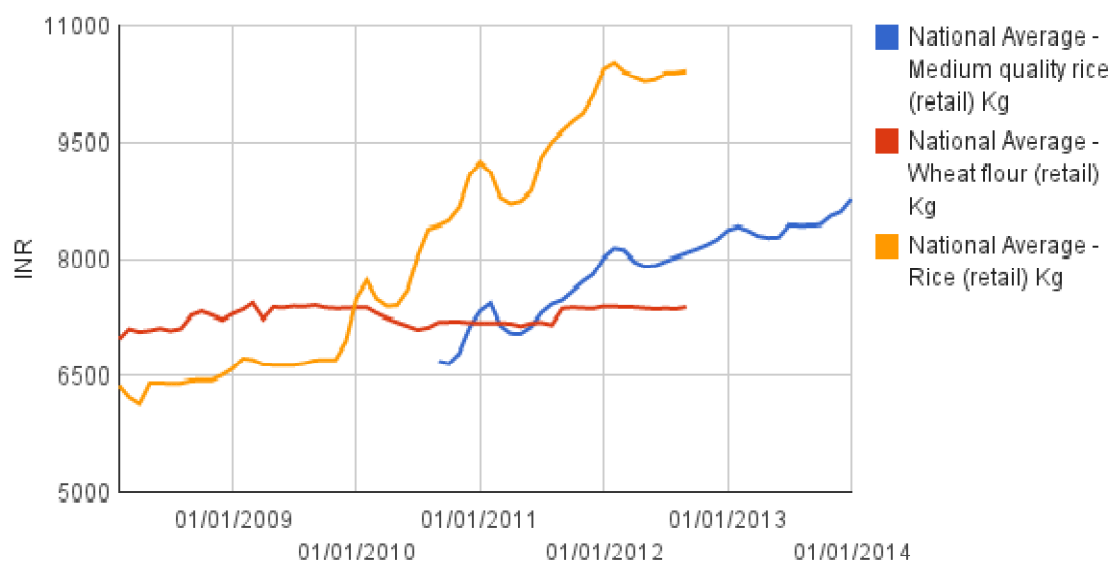
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	35.6%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	13.3%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	17.9%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	-0.7%	2005
Cereal import dependency ratio	10.8%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	7.3%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	8.4%	Year to Nov. 13
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	12.2%	Year to Nov. 13

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: National Average



Source: FAO GIEWS

Kenya

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	101.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$160 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	1.2% of GDP	2010
	4.6% of total expenditure	2010

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	43.4%	2005
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	45.9%	2005
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$860	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.52	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	30.8% of poorest quintile	2005

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	25.8%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	76.3%	2005
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	35.0% of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	166 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	36.9 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

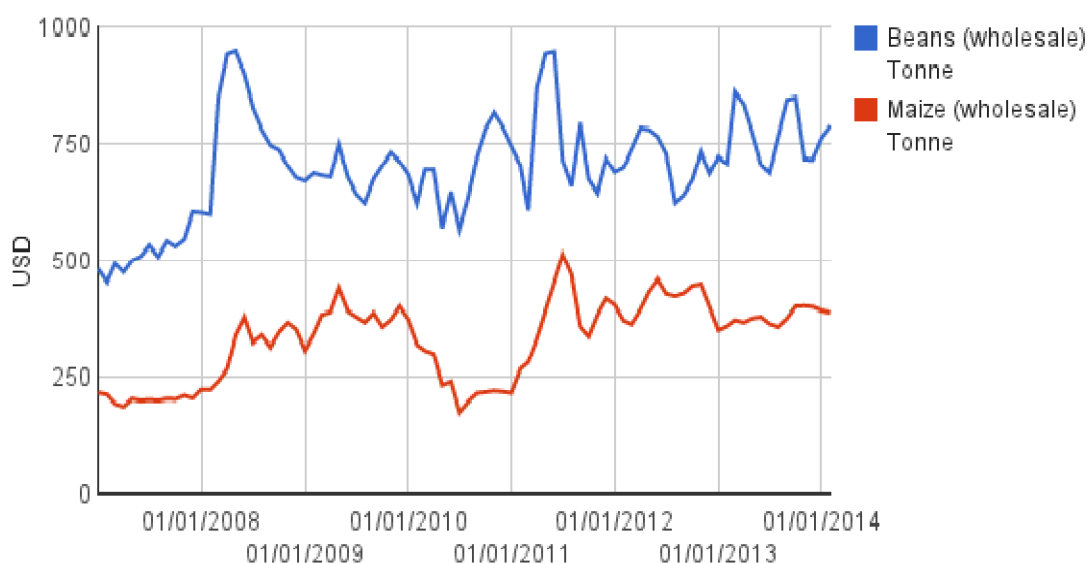
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	35.3%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	6.7%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	16.1%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

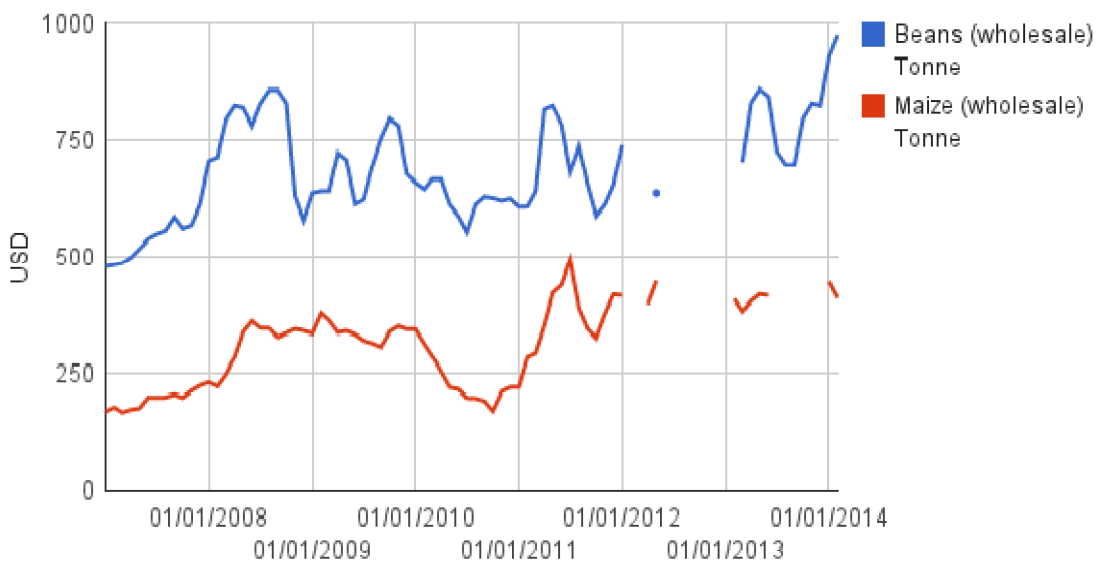
Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	-0.8%	2005
Cereal import dependency ratio	36.1%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	5.4%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	7.4%	Year to Nov. 13
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	6.5%	Year to Jun. 13

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: Nairobi



Food prices: Mombasa



Source: FAO GIEWS

Pakistan

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	114.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$190 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	0.2% of GDP	2011
	1.0% of total expenditure	2011

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	21.0%	2008
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	22.3%	2006
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$1,260	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.52	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	15.8% of poorest quintile	2010

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	17.2%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	75.2%	2005
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	48.8% of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	131 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	40.4 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

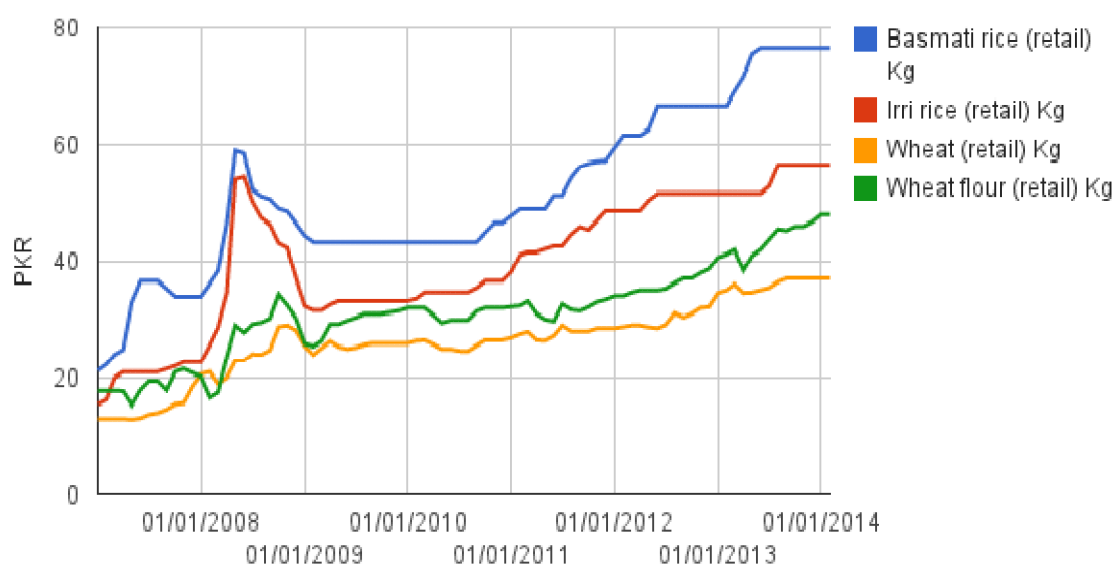
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	43.7%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	15.1%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	31.5%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	-0.7%	2005
Cereal import dependency ratio	5.6%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	7.4%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	10.9%	Year to Nov. 13
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	9.8%	Year to Oct. 13

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: Karachi



Vietnam

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	125.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$292 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	1.3% of GDP	2010
	3.9% of total expenditure	2010

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	16.9%	2008
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	20.7%	2010
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$1,550	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.62	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	45.6% of poorest quintile	2006

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	8.3%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	65.4%	2010
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	31.3% of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	63 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	49.2 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

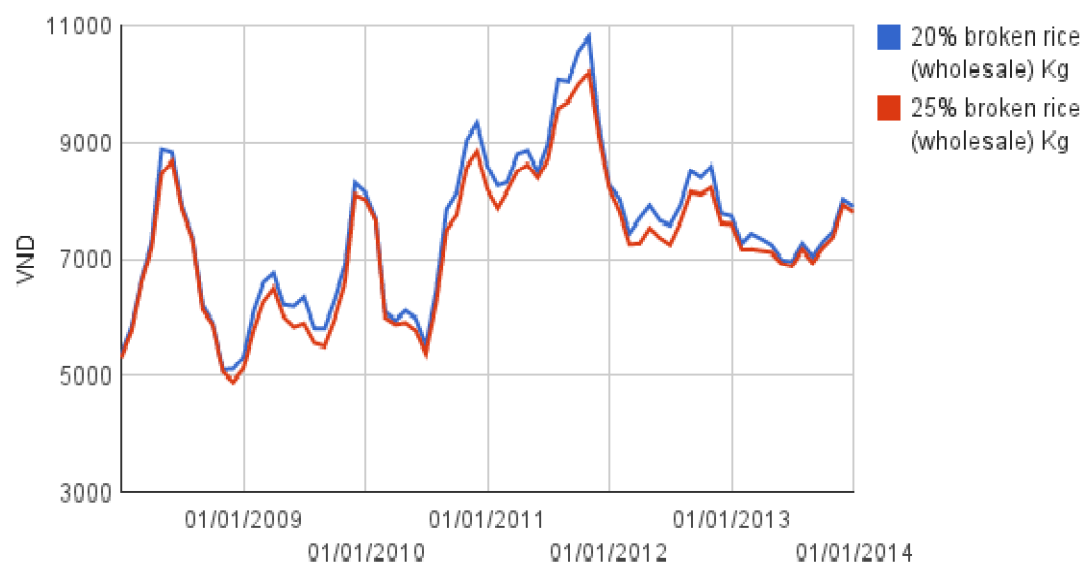
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	22.7%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	4.1%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	11.7%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	-0.7%	2005
Cereal import dependency ratio	7.9%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	8.8%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	#N/A	Year to #N/A
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	#N/A	Year to #N/A

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: An Giang



Source: FAO GIEWS

Zambia

Year

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy	91.0%	2011-2013
Average value of food production	\$101 per capita (Int'l \$)	2009-2011
Agriculture expenditure	1.9% of GDP	2009
	9.3% of total expenditure	2009

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)	74.5%	2010
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	60.5%	2010
GNI per capita, Atlas method	\$1,350	2012
Human Development Index (HDI) value	0.45	2012
Social protection coverage for poorest quintile	1.0% of poorest quintile	2010

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment	43.1%	2011-2013
Share of food expenditure of the poor	76.9%	2002
Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure	11.2% of total expenditure	2005
Depth of the food deficit	306 kcal/caput/day	2011-2013
Global Food Security Index Ranking	28.5 Score (from 100)	2013

UTILIZATION

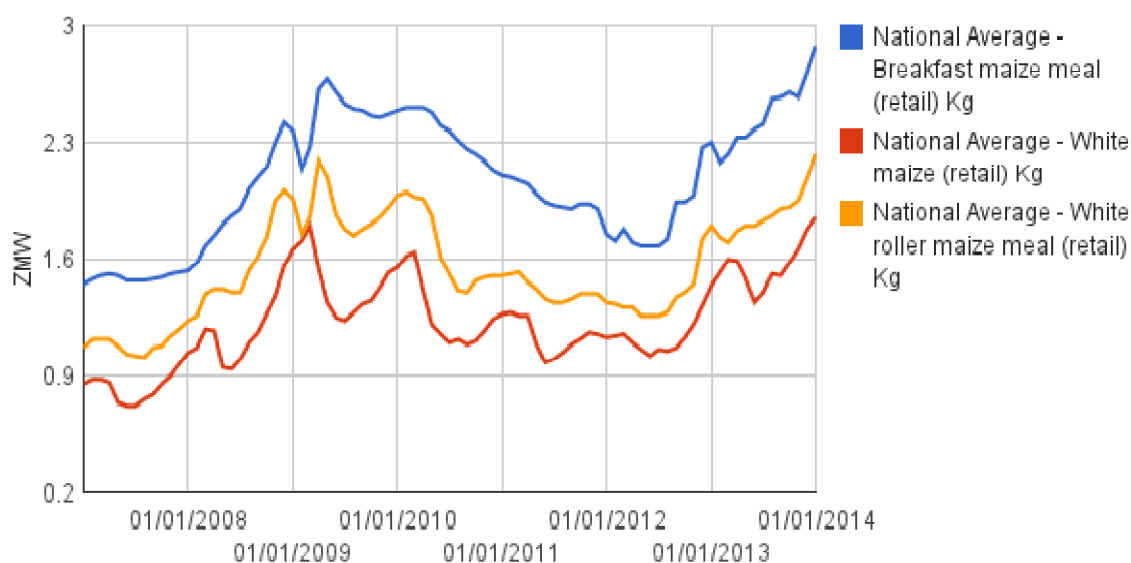
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted	45.4%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting	5.2%	2008-2012
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight	14.6%	2008-2012

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)	-0.8%	2005
Cereal import dependency ratio	4.9%	2007-2009
Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated	7.1%	2013
Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change	7.0%	Year to Sep. 13
Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change	6.5%	Year to Sep. 13

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

Food prices: National Average



Data Sources

DETERMINANTS (INPUTS)

AVAILABILITY

Average dietary energy supply adequacy

FAO: <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/ess-fadata/en/> Version: 20 Dec 2013

Average value of food production

FAO: <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/ess-fadata/en/> Version: 20 Dec 2013

Agriculture expenditure

IFPRI, *Statistics of Public Expenditure for Economic Development (SPEED)*: <http://www.ifpri.org/book-39/ourwork/programs/priorities-public-investment/speed-database> Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

ECONOMIC ACCESS

Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)

World Bank:
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.DDAY>
Accessed 12 Mar 2014

Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)

World Bank:
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.NAHC>
Accessed 12 Mar 2014

GNI per capita, Atlas method

World Bank:
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD>
Accessed 12 Mar 2014

Human Development Index (HDI) value

UNDP: <https://data.undp.org/dataset/Table-1-Human-Development-Index-and-its-components/wxub-qc5k>
Accessed 12 Mar 2014

Social protection coverage for poorest quintile

World Bank:
<http://databank.worldbank.org/Data/Views/VariableSelection/SelectVariables.aspx?source=1229> Accessed 12 Mar 2014

OUTCOMES

INADEQUATE ACCESS TO FOOD

Prevalence of undernourishment

FAO: <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/ess-fadata/en/> Version: 20 Dec 2013

Share of food expenditure of the poor

FAO: <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/ess-fadata/en/> Version: 20 Dec 2013

Share of food expenditure in total income/expenditure

World Bank:
[http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/variableselection/selectvariables.aspx?source=international-comparison-program-\(2005\)](http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/variableselection/selectvariables.aspx?source=international-comparison-program-(2005)) Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

Depth of the food deficit

FAO: <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/ess-fadata/en/> Version: 20 Dec 2013

Global Food Security Index Ranking

EIU: <http://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com/> Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

UTILIZATION

Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted

UNICEF: <http://www.unicef.org/sowc2014/numbers>
Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting

UNICEF: <http://www.unicef.org/sowc2014/numbers>
Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are underweight

UNICEF: <http://www.unicef.org/sowc2014/numbers>
Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

VULNERABILITY/STABILITY

Own-price elasticity for food, beverages, and tobacco (1)

USDA:
http://www.ers.usda.gov/datafiles/International_Food_Consumption_Patterns/2005_Data/table4.xls Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

Cereal import dependency ratio

FAO: <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/ess-fadata/en/> Version: 20 Dec 2013

Inflation, average consumer prices: Estimated

IMF: <http://goo.gl/pHNSFy> Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

Inflation, average consumer prices: Latest 12-month change

ILO:
http://laborsta.ilo.org/sti/EN/SUB/CPI_TCPI_COI_IN.xls
Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

Inflation, food and non-alcoholic beverages: Latest 12-month change ILO:

http://laborsta.ilo.org/sti/EN/SUB/CPI_TCPI_COI_IN.xls
Accessed: 12 Mar 2014

(1) Change in expenditure resulting from a 1% increase in prices

NOTES

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http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/GEP/GEP2014a/Commodity_Markets_Outlook_2014_January.pdf (last accessed 19 May 2014)
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- ⁶² God was less frequently mentioned in relation to rights to food within the Ethiopian communities. Unfortunately, the Vietnam communities were not asked these questions, and so we are unable to explore the possibility that a history of Communist rule influences how religion shapes popular perceptions of economic and social rights.
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- ⁶⁴ For an extended discussion of perspectives on the roles of male breadwinners, see Kelbert and Hossain (2014).
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